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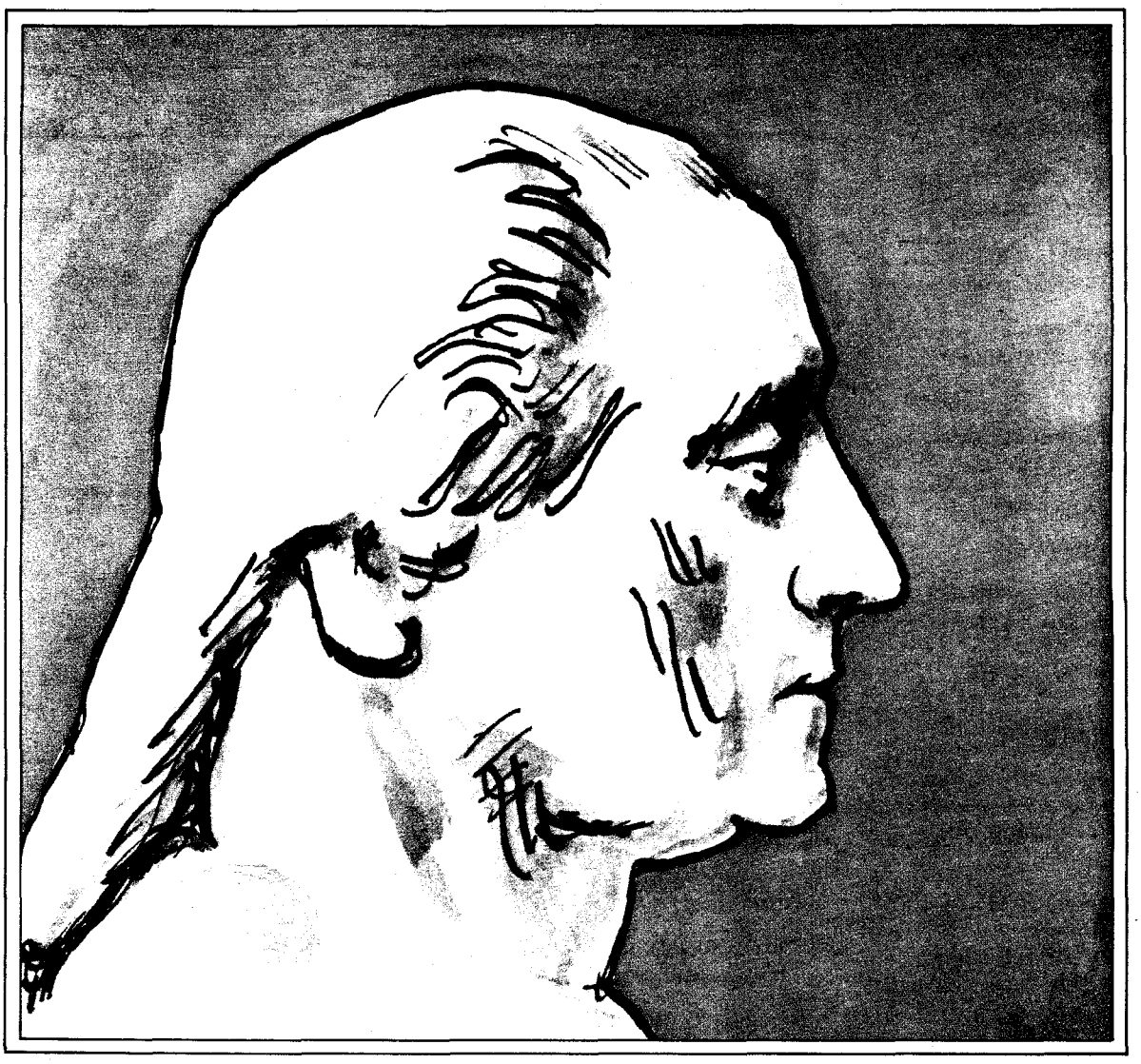

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The Conservative Mind 1985

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SHINE, PERISHING REPUBLIC

Murray Rothbard recently described American conservatism as "chaos and old night." Apart from the nasty implication that we are all dunces, there is something to what he says. It is getting harder every year to figure out just what it is that makes a conservative. Consider Newt Gingrich—the Carl Sagan of politics. He wants to colonize the stars, mine the galaxies for precious minerals, and open up the entire universe to free trade and economic opportunity. In between star treks, Gingrich plans to alter the government of South Africa and become President of the United States (but he won't take office till the year 2001). The most astonishing part of the Georgia congressman's program is the label: conservative opportunity society. Opportunity, we understand, but *conservative*? If ever there was a politician who exemplified the liberal temper of the American mind, it is Newt Gingrich. He is undoubtedly a force for good in the Congress and is unquestionably one of the most ingenious thinkers in Washington, but if he is a conservative, then what does that make Senator Helms?

Does the word conservative have any substantial meaning in the 1980's? The John Birch Society is typically described as conservative, but so is Milton Friedman and so was Jimmy Carter, in the beginning—the one, a libertarian free trader, the other, a welfare statist who sacrificed U.S. interests all over the globe. T. S. Eliot and Richard Weaver were also conservatives. Would either of them have been able to sniff out any conservative pheromones in Friedman's pronouncements on freedom or in Mr. Carter's sermons on compassion? With the success of the Reagan Revolution, however, no sane person (I do not speak of academics) is willing to admit publicly that he is a liberal. To paraphrase Edward VII on socialism, you can say we're all conservatives now.

Ah well, *tempora mutantur et nos mutamur in illis*—times change, and we must get on the bandwagon before the music stops playing. A conservative, after all, might be nothing better than a man determined to hold on to what he's got, what Russell Kirk called Fafnir conservatives. Peter Viereck thought it was conservative to preserve the status quo post-New Deal. This sentiment of stupid conformity and blind faith in the present is not to be dismissed lightly. A man holding onto a window ledge by his fingertips on the 50th floor is generally right not to let go. There are times when the only thing keeping the American democracy from exploding into 225 million dissociated atoms is just this unreasoning attachment to the way things are—or the way we think they are.

But if there is no more to conservatism than habit and prejudice, it may well deserve Mill's nickname for the Tories, "the stupid party." It is one thing to rely on the wholesome stolidity of the masses but quite another to confuse bigotry with political philosophy. Burke celebrated the solid virtues of the British nation by comparing them with contented cattle. He did not, however, elevate mooing to the level of oratory. But Burke was not a democrat. He did not live in a democratic country. We are differently placed, and it is the great temptation of our political leaders to take their principles from poll data and election returns.

In a democratic society like ours, political thinkers are all the more obliged to be very clear about first principles, precisely because almost nobody else cares. In the heat of the moment, our political leaders will say or do almost anything, so long as it puts them on the crest of a popular tide. (In their rhetorical passions they are almost as convincing as a boy in the backseat at a drive-in movie, and they show us almost as much respect the day after the election.) Even our President, ordinarily a very sensible man, cannot resist the temptation. Casting about for signs of wholesomeness in the nation, he lights upon a girl military cadet—as if our affirmative-action armed forces were not in dreadful shape.

It is time for political thinkers to persuade political leaders to consider the consequences of their policies. It is not enough to know which way to vote on the MX missile or a tax proposal. Parties and policies change, and it may only take a decade to render all our hardware obsolete. Statesmanship must be more than a matter of rigging

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elections or cobbling legislative bills. It requires a vision of what American society should be like and of the way it ought to work. It requires, in other words, a political philosophy, standards by which we can judge all the candidates, issues, and programs that are paraded before us, like so many bathing beauties, on the evening news.

Is there anything like a conservative political philosophy at work in America today? I think not. At least, there is not *one* philosophy. There are, however, several philosophies or visions which can be described as conservative without doing too much violence to conventional opinion. Three such visions immediately come to mind: democratic capitalism, reactionary Catholicism, and middle American populism. These are not the only visions, and almost nobody is purely one or the other, but these three —especially on the extreme—are different enough to serve as models.

DEMOCRATIC CAPITALISTS have reason to be proud. It is their efforts which have put the U.S. on the road to economic recovery and have inspired a mood of national ebullience which would have been unthinkable in 1980. In a way, they are the Arminians of the conservative reformation: free will is everything and the marketplace is the mechanism for solving most problems of the human flesh. They exhibit an almost boundless faith in the human capacity for transcending material limitations and speak of unleashing human energies and resources with the same optimism older conservatives used when they spoke of unleashing Chiang Kai-shek against the Communists. With considerable justification they point to the great triumphs of democracy and the free market in Europe and the U.S.: unprecedented standards of living, political stability, and —above all—the freedom of choice we enjoy, freedom to worship, to read, write and publish, to vote as we please.

Their vision of America is of hundreds of millions of individuals, each pursuing his own goals and helping to determine by his vote the sort of society we live in. By majority rule we even determine our social priorities and the kinds of institutional restraints we are willing to impose on ourselves (here they usually part company with the libertarians). Still, nothing is completely exempt from the laws of the marketplace, not even questions of morality and religion—Michael Novak speaks of the empty shrine at the heart of our civil religion. Communism and socialism are the enemy, not because they are varieties of "atheist materialism," but because they impose coercive restraints on the free market of ideas as well as goods. To those who would restrict our freedoms in the name of social justice —Catholics as well as Marxists—their reply is simple. They ask us to judge by results. "Social justice," in Soviet Russia or Catholic Latin America, means, in the end, nothing but poverty, class divisions, and oppression.

REACTIONARY CATHOLICS are suspicious of any ideology that leans too heavily on the idea of economic man. Pius IX and Leo XIII were almost equally hostile to capitalism and socialism, because they undermined the social order and diminished the quality of Christian charity. Freedom they regard as a good thing but not as an absolute. More important is our vision of human life, its purpose and nature. We cannot fall back on freedom as a first principle, because it only begs the question: free to do what, to pursue virtue or just make money? Although many conservative Catholics have made their peace with capitalism, others prefer to remain aloof.

An eminent Catholic philosopher once tried to explain to me why he did not consider himself a conservative. "You see," he said, "you would like to preserve the rich in their power and privileges, while I want to tear them down." If by the rich, he meant not hardworking businessmen but the sort of degenerate rabble that attempts to pass itself off as an American aristocracy, it is hard not to sympathize. The Catholics share with "traditionalists" and Southern agrarians a concern for family, community, and the common good, which they regard as higher priorities than the right to amass wealth. The cult of individuality is the corrosive acid that eats away at the social fabric, divides families and communities, and encourages the profit-seeking dislocations that characterize so much of life in modern America. But their concern for virtue does not lead them to embrace clerical fascism or any form of the totalitarian state, because they recognize (with Aquinas) that law and the state exist only to make the virtuous life possible: virtue cannot be compelled.

POPULISTS are the black sheep of conservatism, and there are those who deny them even the slightest connection with "the movement." Still, without the support of hardhats, farmers, and antiabortionists, hardly anyone professing conservative sentiments could be elected to national office. Since populism is by definition a mass movement, it has produced no philosophers, but there are a few political analysts who are not completely unsympathetic: Kevin Phillips, Robert Whittaker, and Samuel Francis. Whittaker, in particular, sees populism as a series of uprisings against entrenched elites.

What most populists seem to want most is control over their own lives. They want the government off their backs and out of their businesses, homes, and schools. They would like to reestablish community consensus as a basic principle and do not understand how a bunch of deracinated intellectuals and bureaucrats can force them to tolerate drugs, pornography, and abortion clinics in their own hometowns, and gay bars in their neighborhoods. Some of them are socially libertarian and even vaguely countercultural: they sing along with Charlie Daniels, when he warns, "leave this longhaired countryboy alone." Others have an ethical vision that is, however simple, closer to Aquinas than to the democratic capitalist creed of freedom at any cost, and while they would like much lower taxes and complain about welfare fraud, they do not necessarily think a nation can turn its back on the poor. Some of them have spent enough time out of work to appreciate Unemployment Compensation and do not quite trust all this talk of high tech and an opportunity society. Opportunity for *whom*?

What holds these groups together, New Right and Old Right, hardhats, and traditionalists, is our hostility to the common enemy: the left. But it is a shaky coalition. The populists have a very old alliance with the Democratic Party, one that could be revived if a benevolent plague thinned out the party leadership. Apart from the President

(continued on page 43)

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The Mind and Heart of T. S. Eliot *by Russell Kirk*

"Fuimus Troes, fuit Ilium et ingens Gloria Teucrorum."
(We once were Trojans, there once was Troy, and the vast glory of the Teucrian race.)

—Vergil

Peter Ackroyd: *T. S. Eliot: A Life*; Simon & Schuster; New York.

In 1948, when I kept a bookshop, not a few young people still fancied that Eliot expressed their own romantic nihilism. Many books about him having been published since then, that illusion no longer prevails. Eliot's descent into the numinous depths of the soul is not the path to Avernus; and "Difficulties of a Statesman" no longer is taken for an ideological poem.

The latest biography of Eliot is a good piece of work in general, but the unavailability of Eliot's letters (in process of being edited by Valerie Eliot) imposes limitations. Besides, Mr. Peter Ackroyd (now 36 years old) did not know Eliot or Eliot's principal friends, and is acquainted only at second hand with the intellectual currents of Eliot's age. He appears to be unfamiliar with various important studies of Eliot published in the United States—I think particularly of the writing of Marion Montgomery—and with my own book *Eliot and His Age*, which contains letters from Eliot not published elsewhere.

"Ackroyd's is the most comprehensive full-length critical biography we have of this almost talismanic figure of literary modernism."

Newsweek

Recent psychobiographers, less sympathetic than is Mr. Ackroyd, have endeavored to discover vast dark secrets in Eliot's life. But the truth about his sorrow is quite simple and not at all extraordinary: he married young, imprudently; he loved not wisely but too well; his first wife, Vivienne, was neurotic from the first, became unbearable, and presently went mad. She vanished into an asylum; not until after her death did Eliot marry a second time, and wisely. I never have found the details of other folks' marital troubles a fascinating topic, though it delights psychobiographers. But great poets, who perceive more clearly than does the average sensual man, also may feel more deeply. Out of that sorrow of Eliot's and his search for consolation through faith arose Eliot's major poems.

In the days when I used to see Eliot in London or Edinburgh, I knew next to nothing about Eliot's disastrous marriage. This ignorance produced a *faux pas*. One day in 1954, I spent some hours with Wyndham Lewis and his wife in their Notting Hill studio-flat. The next day I lunched at the Garrick with Eliot and Herbert Agar. As we were putting on our coats to depart, I remarked to my companions that Froanna Lewis was an admirable woman: I had fancied from reading Lewis's novel *Self Condemned* that Mrs. Lewis was another sort of person. Upon the utterance of this judgment, Eliot and Agar fell distressingly silent. What had I done? Wasn't it cricket to mention ladies at the Garrick Club? This blunder occurred four years before Eliot married Valerie Fletcher, who brought him peace. To refer to Lewis's wife was to rouse memories of Eliot's first marriage, a subject never to be discussed: no man guarded his privacy more jealously than did Eliot.

The things for which Eliot stood are not difficult to make out. First, he was moved by what Unamuno called "the tragic sense of life." Were it not for the hope that man is made for eternity, we should be wretched. Accepting dogmata, Eliot renewed in this century the apprehension of the theological virtues.

Second, Eliot abided by ancestral wisdom: the Hebraic and Christian and classical patrimony of culture. As Eliot expressed this in his essay "Tradition and the Individual Talent" (1917), "Someone said: 'The dead writers are remote from us because we *know* so much more than they did.' Precisely, and they are that which we know."

Third, Eliot sought to recover the idea of a community of souls, joining the dead, the living, and those yet unborn. The disorder of modern politics is produced by the decay of that community of spirit. As, replying to Karl Mannheim, Eliot wrote of modern political theory: "Being occupied only with humanity in the mass, it tends to separate itself from ethics; being occupied only with that recent period of history during which humanity can most easily be shown to have been ruled by impersonal forces, it reduces the proper study of mankind to the last two or three hundred years of man. It too often inculcates a belief in a future inflexibly determined and at the same time a future which we are wholly free to shape as we like."

What Eliot's revolution in literature gave to his age was a renewal of moral imagination—with social consequences, potentially. Eliot's orthodoxy, expressed in new forms, offered something more attractive to mind and heart than could either liberalist aridity or the ominous People's Hall of Culture. Literature and society both depend upon belief in a transcendent

Russell Kirk is author of Eliot and His Age, *recently republished by Regnery Gateway.*

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order, Eliot reminded the 20th century. "If you will not have God (and he is a jealous God) you should pay your respects to Hitler or Stalin," Eliot wrote in *The Idea of a Christian Society*. Eliot scandalized many because he went all the way to "the awful daring of a moment's surrender"—that is, surrender to the divine.

"It is a tendency of creative literature," Rebecca West concludes in *The Court and the Castle*, "when it rises above a certain level, to involve itself with statecraft and religion: to exist and to belong to Him." Eliot involved himself with both, boldly submitting his strong private rationality to the authority of dogmas. But to the popular statecraft of his own time, Eliot did not surrender: against totalism, he set the idea of a Christian society.

"There seems to be no hope in contemporary politics at all," he wrote in *The Criterion*, in 1933. As he wrote to me two decades later, "A decline in private morality is certain to be followed in the long run by a decline in public and political morality also." Before humankind stretches a dark age: "We are destroying our ancient edifices to make ready the ground upon which the barbarian nomads of the future will encamp in their mechanized caravans," he put it in *Notes Towards the Definition of Culture*.

Eliot's was a lonely voice in the 40's and 50's; today he is echoed by many thinking people—among them, Malcolm Muggeridge, once contemptuous of Eliot. There are no lost causes because there are no gained causes, Eliot argued in his essay on Francis Herbert Bradley: "We fight for lost causes because we know that our defeat and dismay may be the preface to our successors' victory, though that victory itself will be temporary; we fight rather to keep something alive than in the expectation it will triumph." Often I have been heartened by that passage.

Eliot's adversary, H. G. Wells, so influential between the wars, died despairing for humanity. Eliot will endure because he was a man of imagination, while Wells was a man of fancy. Eliot knew that men may redeem the time only if they apprehend the timeless; that the dream may be redeemed only if one distinguishes between those false dreams which issue from between the gates of ivory, and those true dreams which issue from between the gates of horn.

"After such knowledge, what forgiveness?" Gerontion soliloquizes. The shallow presumption of doctrinaire rationalism, Eliot argued, has stranded us in cactus-land. "Where is the wisdom we have lost in knowledge?/ Where is the knowledge we have lost in information?" Those lines from *The Rock* now speak to many of the rising generation—even if some of that generation turn to strange gods.

On the oval memorial tablet in the medieval church at East Coker, where Eliot lies buried, is graven the line borrowed from Mary Stuart: "In my end is my beginning." The poet had passed from great sorrow to resignation and hope.

From the beginning, it had been Eliot's purpose to defend "lost" causes. He was loyal to what he called "the permanent things," understanding that these permanent things are not the creations of men merely. As the inheritor of the purpose of Vergil and of Dante, Eliot endeavored to "redeem the time, redeem the dream." It must be redeemed in every age.

"His work represents the brilliant efflorescence of a dying culture," Mr. Ackroyd concludes his biography. "He pushed that culture together by an act of will, giving it a shape and context which sprang out of his own obsessions, and the certainties which he established were rhetorical certainties." Indeed? Rhetoric is "the art of persuasion, beautiful and just." Persuasive Eliot certainly remains for many of us; and the certitudes that Eliot expressed will remain something more than mere arrangements of words. cc

REVISIONS

Expounding the Law

Ever since Hume, philosophers have been skeptical about the laws of nature. Scientists, it is argued, do not discover actual rules that govern the nature of things, only regularly occurring coincidences. There is an observable relationship between pressure and temperature in a container full of gas, but the connection is not a necessary one. This Regularity Theory has undergone a good deal of sophistication, but every version—no matter how complicated—seems to rule out truth as a proper object of scientific inquiry.

In recent years a number of philosophers have become skeptical of skepticism. Prominent among them is D. M. Armstrong, who devotes better than a third of *What Is a Law of Nature?* (Cambridge Studies in Philosophy; Cambridge University Press) to poking holes in the Regularity Theory, the identification of laws of nature with observable uniformities. On the one hand, not all uniformities can be viewed as laws. (In his essay "What Is a Law of Nature?" A. J. Ayer used as an example the fact that cigarettes in his pocket were inevitably made of Virginia tobacco.) On the other hand, probabilistic laws do not involve "Humean uniformities." Laws of nature, he argues, must be principles of explanation. It is not enough for *a* to accompany *b*: "The presence of smoke is a good reason for thinking that fire is present. But it is not an explanation of the presence of fire." No explanation, no law.

Armstrong's own position is that laws of nature are necessary relationships between two universal properties. In addition, these universals must be "instantiated," that is, actually occur in the world. He rejects both nominalism, which holds that only particulars exist, and Platonic realism, which regards only universals as real. He substitutes for these extremes "the mutual dependence of universals upon particulars, and particulars upon universals." Particulars cannot exist without properties (which are universal) and universals must be manifest in particulars.

Armstrong's book makes a strong case for universals as the basis of laws of nature; his clear and forceful arguments might assist in rescuing scientific theory from the clutches of nominalism and subjectivity. However, it is unfortunate that so many pages have been devoted to the arid analysis of symbolic propositions. So much of it reads like a string of "uninstantiated universals" that the occasional examples come as a great relief. It is high time another Socrates brought philosophy down from the clouds and into, if not the streets, at least the marketplace of ideas. (TJF) cc

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Special-Interest Democracy *by Arthur Shenfield*

"Millions endeavoring to supply
Each other's lust and vanity."
—Bernard Mandeville

Milton and Rose Friedman: *The Tyranny of the Status Quo*; Harcourt Brace Jovanovich; San Diego, CA.

Amitai Etzioni: *Capital Corruption*; Harcourt Brace Jovanovich; San Diego, CA.

It is a commonplace that modern democracy suffers from a grave malady, namely the dominance of sectional interest groups. Majority rule turns out to be a species of minority rule. What is enacted by legislatures is done by formal majorities, but it does not serve the interests of the majority of the people, nor does it represent what the majority of the people, with eyes open, would choose for themselves. The eternal conflict between the general interest and sectional interests avid to batten upon the general interest is settled by a series of bargains between the sectional interests. Each is allowed to suck the milk of the general community on condition that one or more of the others may do likewise. The result is general loss, and sectional gain, except very occasionally in the short run, is less than that of the general loss. The malady is as old as democracy itself, indeed as old as politics, though its symptoms in non-democratic systems may be different from those in democratic systems. It has sealed the fate of many a political order, and democracy is no more immune from its deadly consequences than other systems.

It may be contended that bargains between sectional interests under which each may prey in turn upon the general interest, themselves represent the general interest if the bargainers add up to a majority of the people. In fact they very rarely do, but even if they did this contention would have only a superficial truth. The deeper and more important truth is that each sectional interest is organized to see its own quick advantage, but hopelessly unorganized to see, or is blinded to, the cost imposed upon it by the other sectional interests. Add this consequent loss to the loss imposed upon the unorganized millions who pay for the depredations of all the sectional interests, it remains clearly true that sectional-interest bargains run counter to the general interest, even in the rare cases where the bargainers add up to, or represent, a majority of the people.

This malady exercises the minds both of the Friedmans and of Amitai Etzioni. But how different are their diagnoses and their remedies!

The Friedmans' *Tyranny of the Status Quo* is a sequel to their best-selling *Free to Choose*. The status quo is the situation established and heavily guarded by the "Iron Triangle," in the three corners of which are the direct beneficiaries of sectionally inspired policies and enactments, the bureaucrats who thrive on them, and the politicians who seek votes by means of them. Its tyranny, according to the Friedmans, is powerful enough to arrest and then reverse the efforts of innovating politicians to break out of the triangle. Such politicians are elected because the status quo breeds discontent in the people. Without fully understanding why or how they themselves have acquiesced in it or caused it, the majority of the people sense that there is something wrong in the prevailing system. The discontent gives innovating or reforming politicians six to nine months at most in which to make fundamental changes. Support for reform then wears off and the Iron Triangle reasserts its power.

Thus it has been that President Reagan and Mrs. Thatcher, both proclaiming the need to reverse the errors of decades, were elected with large majorities. In their first few months they initiated great changes, but then the forces of the status quo reasserted themselves, and at best Mr. Reagan and Mrs. Thatcher have managed only to prevent a headlong retreat to the perilous ways of their predecessors.

Although the status quo of 1932 was vastly different from that of 1980, the Friedmans discern the same law in the case of Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal. The major social and economic changes were made in the famous "one hundred days" special congressional session which Roosevelt called immediately after his inauguration. However, here they see a qualification to the rule of the status quo. Thus "if the early successes of a new administration reflect a basic change in public opinion, the apparent lack of further progress after the first six to nine months will be deceptive. The early actions will continue to have their effects after they have disappeared from the front pages. The altered political atmosphere will lead the defeated opposition to modify its political position. Even if the opposition succeeds in returning to power, it will not pursue the same course that it pursued before." In this case, the Republicans in opposition came to acquiesce in, in many cases to firmly believe in, the myths and superstitions of the New Deal revolution, which thus sank deep into the minds of the American people.

All in all, the lesson to be drawn from these considerations is not only

Arthur Shenfield, former director of The British Industrial Policy Group and of The International Institute for Economic Research, is an economist, barrister, and author.

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that new Administrations have no more than a short time to enact major changes in law and public policy, but also that even if these are made within the brief favorable period, they are unlikely to have a permanent effect unless they reflect or produce a sea change in public opinion.

It follows, according to this argument, that in modern democracies, simply changing the rulers will not do. To defeat the Iron Triangle, the Constitutional rules, not the political rulers, must be changed. This, the Friedmans say, was the experience of the framers of the American Constitution when the very existence of the United States was threatened by the fissiparous tendencies of the Articles of Confederation. Accordingly, they commend the Constitutional route now being taken to balance the budget, to set a limit to taxation, and to provide a line-item veto power for the President, who is distinguished from all other politicians in that he alone, with his Vice President, is elected by the whole people and therefore in this measure represents the general interest.

It is a powerful argument, and in my judgment, essentially correct. It is backed in this book by an analysis of a wide range of problems, taxation, government expenditure, inflation, unemployment, tariffs, defense, even crime and education, all done with the clarity of exposition familiar to the readers of *Free to Choose*. (Even in the one instance where, as I believe, the Friedmanite case is not proven, namely the advocacy of legitimation of the use of, and the traffic in, addictive drugs, the prose is clear.) Fortunate indeed is a nation which has mentors such as the Friedmans!

The subject of *Capital Corruption* is the alleged corruption of the political process by private moneyed interests. Is there anything new about this? Amitai Etzioni thinks that there is. He alleges that a powerful new corrupting force has arisen in the form of the PAC's, and he is very excited about it. In his view they have raised the political power of private money to unprecedented heights.

What is the difference between the PAC's and earlier well-financed pressure groups? It lies, he says, partly in their form of organization and partly in their formal legitimacy. Their organization enables them to tailor their efforts to specific sectional interests more precisely and more comprehensively than most of the old types of pressure groups; and, unlike many of the old types, they are organized for continuity. Thus their influence is applied more professionally, and it continues beyond elections, so that politicians are more likely to "stay bought" than hitherto. Their legitimacy frees politicians from the furtiveness which perhaps was occasionally associated with the old style of pressure or corruption.

For this scandalous evil, as it appears to Mr. Etzioni, he offers seven main remedies. Full, though voluntary, financing of congressional elections; strict control over the use of campaign funds; shortening of campaign periods, as in Britain; new curbs on lobbying; extended disclosure laws; extension from two to four years for congressmen's terms; and a substantial increase in congressional salaries.

To show that some, perhaps most, PAC's may have a corrupting influence is not difficult. But Mr. Etzioni imagines that this proves the gravamen of his case, which it does not; namely that corruption is inherent in the PAC system, and that its intensity and penetration have been raised above pre-PAC levels. As for his remedies, we may acknowledge that some of them may have merit, whether there are PAC's or not.

The quality of Mr. Etzioni's thought may be judged from the prejudice which he artlessly evinces in various contexts. Touch him at any point, and the conventional myths of American "liberalism" are displayed. The source of political evil, he thinks, is the unequal accumulation of wealth. Thus he is blinded to the nature of the most powerful corrupting group of our times, namely the "poor"; by which I do not mean that the poor themselves set out to corrupt or consciously do so. That is done by those who proclaim themselves to be the champions and benefactors of the poor, seeking power by climbing on the backs of the poor. It is a corrupting power even greater than that of the labor unions, possibly the second greatest, of which Mr. Etzioni is only faintly aware.

Consider the case of New York City. Boss Tweed was a great thief. But he did not bankrupt the city. In the whole long period of Tammany corruption, New York was successful, vigorous, and solvent. Compare this with the Lindsay-Beame period. Mayors Lindsay and Beame were not thieves, I believe, but they bankrupted their city. The corruptions of "welfare" for the poor and of labor union power were deadly where those of Tammany were not.

Mr. Etzioni's naiveté is most striking in his belief that America must seek again the "triumph" of the early 20th century "Progressive" era (no doubt with muck spreaders calling themselves muckrakers, and all). With President Theodore Roosevelt, Americans must inveigh against "malefactors of great wealth." The only difference will be that the calumnies and misconceptions will center upon impersonal Big Business instead of the personalized Robber Barons.

A further illustration of the quality of his thought is shown by his fulsome praise for the work of the British sociologist, the late T. H. Marshall. Marshall thought that the next progressive step from equal political status, i.e., equality before the law, and fulfilling it, was equal "socioeconomic" status, i.e., equality of wealth and income. The truth is that equal "socioeconomic" status, or rather the quest for it, is a contradiction. It destroys, not fulfills, equality before the law. It is a delusion which has humbled and impoverished Marshall's own country, but from which his countrymen are now slowly and painfully extricating themselves. cc

A serious shortage within Polish university libraries has prompted a request for help. Scholarly editions of classics, criticism, and fiction are needed to remedy a lack of college-level material in English department libraries. Any suitable books and/or monetary donations may be sent for direct forwarding to: Dr. Adam Rudzki, International Literary Center, 475 Park Ave. So., 21st Floor, New York, NY 10016 (212)725-8978; or Dr. Jean Szczypien, 175 MacDougal St., New York, NY 10011 (212)674-5678. cc

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As a City Upon a Hill *by Clyde Wilson*

"A steady Patriot of the World alone,
The friend of every country—but his own."
—George Canning

John Crewdson: *The Tarnished Door: The New Immigrants and the Transformation of America*; Times Books; New York.

Victor Ripp: *Moscow to Main Street: Among the Russian Emigrés*; Little, Brown; Boston.

Lewis A. Coser: *Refugee Scholars in America: Their Impact and Their Experiences*; Yale University Press; New Haven and London.

In 1629, during the crossing of the Atlantic, the prospective settlers of Massachusetts Bay heard a lay sermon from their chosen governor, John Winthrop. They had, he said, entered into a covenant with God. Provided the settlers kept their covenant of godliness, the colony they would found in the New World would become "as a Citty upon a Hill," a blessing to its inhabitants and a beacon to all mankind.

Winthrop's allusion has been a favorite reference in President Reagan's speeches, aimed at shoring up American morale and idealism. That America is a beacon to mankind and possesses a unique relation to divine favor is an idea of great comfort and appeal, and one for which there is a not-insignificant case from historical evidence. Yet there is a vast gap between what the "Citty upon a Hill" signified to Winthrop and the ideal invoked by Reagan. The difference, if I may express it musically, is approximately equivalent to the difference between "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God" and a rock music video. Within the gap lies most of American history.

Piety and exclusiveness were the heart of Winthrop's enterprise. Massachusetts was the retreat of that tiny minority of the elect called to godliness. Through a complicated historical process that included the destruction in the Civil War of an older and rather different Virginian ideal, this vision came to define America. Reagan's city is essentially secular. Not only is it secularized, but it is universalized in a way that would have been incomprehensible to Winthrop. As invoked by Reagan, the beacon upon the hill incorporates the 20th-century image of America as the successful melting pot of all races, nations, and faiths, in the cauldron of common ideals. By contrast, the Puritans were not only proudly Anglo-Saxon, they did not even like non-Puritan Englishmen. For almost three centuries their descendants considered themselves the elite of the elite and the benighted Anglo-Saxons from Pennsylvania southward as hardly within the pale of humanity, much less the rest of mankind. Their beacon was for the world to be guided *by*, not guided *to*.

What would Winthrop have made of a city upon a hill which beckoned as a cornucopia of worldly opportunity rather than as a strenuous struggle for a purified commonwealth? What would he have made of a utopia whose chief glory was in melting down all distinctions, in which any Hindu or Rastafarian could become a full member simply for the easy price of a vague allegiance to an undefined concept of democracy? (Of course, it would please the President if they would also believe in and practice "free enterprise.")

I do not mean to criticize the President, who is the most sincere, decent, and sensible we have had in many a day. He is, like the rest of us, caught up in a history of which we must make the best. There is nothing in Winthrop's city which *necessarily* leads us to the modern America of melting pot and high living standards. Yet, it is here. Reagan's formula, even if not historically sound in its use of Winthrop (historical allusions on the hustings never are), is a well-intentioned recognition of reality. America has had an astounding success, to this point, in incorporating a great variety of races, religions, and nationalities into a presumably workable society and one which has set the gauge for the world in living standards for its masses.

To an originally British (and African) base were added in the middle of the 19th century the Germans and Irish, and in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the eastern and southern Europeans, all now proudly and patriotically American. Catholicism and Judaism have become full partners in what began as a thoroughly and consciously Protestant exercise. We have gloried in the strength of variety and weathered every crisis and strain.

The last third of the 20th century has brought the New Immigration—new presumably because it draws from parts of the world not before largely represented in the American population (Latin America and Asia), because its numbers surpass previous experience, and because a great deal of it is illegal and unassessed. Indeed, one of the characteristics of the New Immigration is that, while all sense that it is large and portentous, nobody really knows its dimensions. As Crewdson shows, no one knows or can possibly know how many foreigners have broken, are breaking, and will continue to break our laws by entering or overstaying. We have not lost control of our borders. Rather, in a sense we have lost control of our land. Responsible projections suggest that the dimensions of the New Immigration are such that within a few decades, by early in the next century, America will have a Latin American and Asian plurality and that the descendants of present U.S. citizens will be a minority.

It would seem reasonable to pose a question at this point in our history. Is the success of the melting pot something that is infinitely repeatable and expansible? One answer to this, seemingly the President's, is that of course it is. There have always been nay-sayers and prophets of doom, who have always been proved wrong. The creative, absorptive, and progressive power of American ideals and opportunities is unlimited. America will absorb the New Immigration and, as in

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the past, emerge the stronger.

There are many other answers that might be given. My own might go like this: We have been extremely lucky but there is no reason to gamble that the luck will hold forever. The economic, political, military, and moral problems we face are not like those of the past and will not be any easier to solve in a society even less stable and coherent in its values than that of today. It is true that America is in one sense an idea, an idea of universal appeal and inspiration and opportunity. But it is also true that America for many of us constitutes not an idea but a quite tangible land and tradition which we like to consider not everybody's and anybody's, but *ours*; and to which we relate not as an abstraction but as a link with our forebears and our posterity. I do not believe that this proclivity of some of us makes us fascists and racists. I think it stamps us indelibly as normal human beings and as quite in the spirit of the Declaration of Independence. Granted that all men and women are equal before God and before the law, it does not necessarily follow that all human societies are abstractions in which people are infinitely interchangeable. Human cultures are in some ways quite sensitive organisms, subject to disruption and debilitation in a variety of ways, many of them not well understood. Considering the changes that we face, would it not be simple prudence to pause and take thought of the morrow?

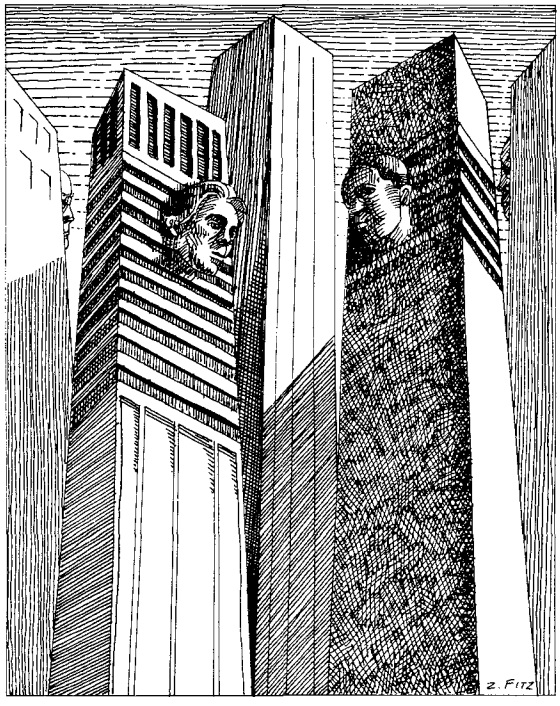
The two answers that I have suggested to the New Immigration by no means exhaust the possible range of responses. However, we are not, as a society, even posing the question, and our response is essentially that of fatalistic paralysis. The three books under consideration, for instance, take up different aspects of immigration. The authors do so ably but somewhat in the manner of the blind men examining the elephant. To none does it occur that there is anything to be done about the beast except to describe him and then to accept whatever bellows and kicks he chooses to give us. The democratic process may decide economic or military matters, but the future composition of the American population is something, apparently, which present citizens have no right to control, or even examine.

The stand of liberals seems to be that immigration is a moral question and one to which there is only one conceivable response. All morality (and also the entire meaning of democracy, the Constitution, ethics, and religion) is summed up for them by egalitarianism and compassion. It is unthinkable that a citizen might have rights which an illegal interloper (as opposed to an invited guest) could not also fully claim: it is unthinkable that, on prudential grounds, there might be some human beings who should not be welcomed and some who should even be expelled for the welfare of the commonwealth. Nor does it come within the realm of morals for present generations of Americans to consider whether they might be bequeathing to their descendants a society intolerably lacking in moral, religious, political, and cultural cohesion. Prior to about the year 1960, consideration of the welfare of one's posterity would have been the height of moral endeavor in the opinion of nearly all of mankind, but posterity has slipped from the consciousness of our present-centered society.

The approach of "conservatives," so far as one can tell, is like their approach to everything else: aside from an occasional verbal bone tossed out to quiet the moral concerns of yapping fundamentalists, it is all a matter of economics. The more people, the more prosperity. There is undoubtedly some connection between population growth and prosperity. But the bald proposition, without qualifying variables, though it seems to be enjoying a vogue, is too absurd to be taken seriously. Were it literally true, we would have to expect India to be all the more prosperous than Japan.

True, a high birthrate and a rising prosperity are historically connected. But does this apply to a welfare state or to a population increasing by immigration while the birthrate of citizens is actually declining? Conservatives are supposed to believe in tradition and community, but they appear to have given no thought to the impact of massive immigration on traditional and consensual values. Conservatives are popularly supposed to favor free enterprise, but appear not to have considered whether free enterprise might rest upon culturally determined habits rather than upon universally applicable abstractions. Conservatives, it is thought, believe in a strong defense and a vigorous foreign policy, but appear not to have reflected that the first requirement for these is morale, an effective domestic unity in which differences stop at the water's edge.

The works in hand are varied, each with a different approach and dealing with a different aspect of the immigration question. *The Tarnished Door* is contemporary reportage. *Refugee Scholars in America* is historical. *Moscow to Main Street* is sensitive cultural portrayal. Each work has the virtue of its genre. *The Tarnished Door*, which deals chiefly with the illegal flow across our southern borders, is the only one of the books centered on the



New Immigration. Ripp's book is about the most recent wave from the Soviet Union (100,000 in the decade ending in 1981). There is nothing new about immigrants from Eastern Europe, unless one considers the newness to consist of the fact that these refugees are people who have lived their entire previous existence inside the Soviet system and have known no other.

The Soviet system, as the author shows, leaves its marks, and the encounter with America is for many far more ambivalent than Americans

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would like to believe. But then, Americans are the only people naive enough to expect newcomers to be completely satisfied and at home. In a series of well-drawn portraits of the experiences of Soviet refugees, Ripp, whose own background gives him a certain insider status among them, makes the ambivalence clear. One does not alter overnight a lifetime habit of suspicion and resistance painfully formed in a totalitarian society. Freedom itself is ambiguous and not self-limiting. It must be defined by other values, sometimes hard-won. Rejection of communism is not necessarily perfectly equivalent to allegiance to the United States. And present-day America, with its crime and formless hedonism, is not exactly the same country which once drew the abler spirits of Europe yearning for new opportunities and horizons. The escape to America, nevertheless, one feels, must be in some sense a gain for the Soviet refugees, or at least for their children. In what sense it is a gain for America is somewhat harder to fathom and must be reckoned up in intangibles if at all.

Coser's book is a detailed and illuminating study of scholarly and literary refugees from fascist Europe between 1933 and 1945. The hard sciences are not covered, though the psychological fields, history, economics, political science, sociology, classics, philosophy, and theology are examined thoroughly, with some attention to creative literature.

It is clear, in retrospect, that the transfer of a substantial portion of European scholarship to this country was a revolutionary event for America. The Continent was the heartland of scholarly prestige while America was still, in most fields, the provinces. In Europe the modern disciplines were already hardened in the direction of their thrust, while in America they were still plastic. The impact of this vast transfer was varied and is not easy to characterize. However, it is perhaps fair to say that the refugees, not without a great deal of native help, were decisive, among other effects, in institutionalizing Marxism and Freudianism and in pointing the "social sciences," with the possible exception of history, in a positivist rather than a humanist direction.

Coser's conventional research is thorough and able and is supplemented by personal acquaintance and interviews with many of the figures he treats or their associates. One of his merits is that he pays attention to those figures whose impact may be said to have been rightward—Voegelin, Strauss, Arendt, Von Mises, Wittfogel, Schumpeter, Nabokov—as well as to the much greater number of "leftists." His approach, if anything, is a bit too chummy and evenhanded. I am not convinced that Herbert Marcuse had a "winning personality," nor that his combination of nihilism and zealous pursuit of the stock market was merely an amusing foible.

Again, one is struck by the ambivalence for both sides of the encounter, in the final accounting. Are Voegelin and Von Mises sufficient to offset the permanent damage done by psychoanalysis, Marcuse, Adorno, Fromm, Lazarsfeld (and many others), and those writers who for a time turned a good deal of Hollywood into a Soviet propaganda mill? Such a question is impractical to ask about a revolution that is already over, and, at any rate, the answer can only depend upon one's scale of values—there are no scientific findings in history. It is clear, however, that in regard to American scholarship, the nature of the beast was changed forever. Considering that before the transfer the pinnacle of the American mind was regarded by many to be occupied by John Dewey, one may not regret the outcome. But what might have been the native developments had not the hardened categories of European thought impinged upon the New World in that way at that time? It would be interesting, also, to lay beside this account of the experiences and impact of the refugees from fascist Europe a comparison with those from post-1945 Communist Europe, but that lies outside Coser's scope.

Crewdson has investigated firsthand the day-to-day reality of the New Immigration. Much of his story has to do with the Border Patrol and the Immigration and Naturalization Service. It is largely a story of incompetence, fraud, corruption, and brutality, leavened by only occasional flashes of integrity and patriotism. But what else is to be expected when undertrained, underpaid, outnumbered young men are sent to do an impossible job under the demoralizing leadership of greedy, hypocritical, and irresponsible liberal appointees of the type with which we all became too familiar in the dreary years from Kennedy to Carter?

Crewdson, if I read him rightly, believes that the New Immigrants are changing America and that the situation we are in is a political and moral scandal, harmful to us and the immigrants. He also believes that given the present and prospective realities of Mexico, there is nothing short of a police state that we can do about it. He favors, then, a mildly optimistic resignation to the inevitable. He sees the New Immigrants as, on balance, a plus. They pay income and social security taxes and engage in productive labor that otherwise would go undone, despite chronic citizen unemployment in some sectors.

If it is indeed inevitable and even mutually beneficial that a good portion of the population of Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean take up residence in the United States, there are yet many creative responses that we could make. There is no historical or Constitutional reason, for instance, for the universalization of all the rights and benefits of American citizenship, which has led to a cheapening of the value of that citizenship more severe than that inflicted upon our currency before 1981. Such a universalization is an authentic American tradition only if one believes that American history began in 1962. Further, President Carter's refusal to enforce our laws during the Mariel boatlift and Congress's proposal to amnesty and reward those who have flouted them in the past would immediately have been recognized by the Founding Fathers as evidence of a deplorable fall from republican virtue and as far more impeachable offenses than poor Nixon's pathetic and absurd intriguings. What about the equally or more deserving immigrant who lost his place because he obeyed our laws? Nor is there any reason to make citizens out of students, because of marriage or procreation on American soil, when the skills they ostensibly came to acquire are desperately needed in their own countries. What would we think of Americans who abandoned their country for comfort if the situation were reversed? Are these the

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kinds of citizens we want in the next crisis?

Our present manner of universalizing citizenship, though regarded by nearly everyone as eternal and sacrosanct, is nothing of the kind. Citizenship, until very recently, has always been understood in historic and inherited terms. If not, there would have been no necessity for the 14th Amendment to formalize the admission of Black Americans into the body of citizens. Until the late 19th century, citizenship was in effect granted by the community. In a land where the work to be done far exceeded the available hands to do it, worthy immigrants were welcomed by their prospective neighbors. In many states they voted before receiving Federal naturalization, which was merely a kind of afterthought ratification of the fact that the immigrant had been accepted as a member in good standing of the community. Citizens of a democracy, in other words, were not interchangeable nonentities manufactured by the government, but grown and nourished by the people. Today hundreds of thousands are made citizens each year by government fiat who have given no sufficient evidence of a will to become members of an American community in good standing. Citizenship which is not earned, cherished, and tied to obligations is not the real thing.

Democracy requires civility and tolerance. It also requires honest deliberation of real issues and citizens with a full stake in their country. In some way or other, in the words of one of Crewdson's chapter titles, "We Are Going to Have to Say No." We do not serve democracy by evading realities, invoking taboos, and wallowing in sentimentality. Of all our modern qualities none would have been more foreign to John Winthrop than a supine yielding to the fates without responsibility for decision and action. Predestinarian or not, were he here today he would tell us straight out about the deadly sin of sloth, the peril of those who fecklessly stumble on into disaster. cc

Stranded by the Time Machine *by Joseph Schwartz*

"I don't know whether it's a good thing to run after our grandchildren and descendants."
—Dobrica Ćosić

H. G. Wells: *Experiment in Autobiography*; Little, Brown; Boston.

H. G. Wells in Love; Edited by G. P. Wells; Little, Brown; Boston.

Anthony West: *H. G. Wells, Aspects of a Life*; Random House; New York.

HG. Wells belongs irrevocably to the past. The publication of these three books is likely only to revive and alter our memory of him —not to change our opinion of his limited value. Although I was never wont to devour everything he wrote, I could not help noticing over the years the great number of his books in the secondhand bookstores I haunted. Among his contemporaries it was Chesterton who commanded my loyalty. I came to understand, however, what gave him the authority and stature he attained in his own day. When *Experiment in Autobiography* was published in 1934, Wells was an aging man of declining ability and appeal. Yet the autobiography received praise that now seems difficult to comprehend: "a miracle," "of first-rate importance," "one of the important human documents of our day." "His mind is really one of the most extraordinary that England has produced in our time"—this last from H. L. Mencken, a usually keen detector of the confusing and the inept. That the book was chaotic, blatantly self-serving, and barely readable made little difference. Wells was by that time a symbol of 20th-century liberalism, and he earned the kudos showered on him by having chosen the "right side." In his world the right side was something like the "right stuff"—you knew it when you came across it.

The right side, 20th-century liberalism, is much less a cohesive body of principles than the dogmatic ring of certainty with which the word is used suggests. Even though it is as much of a rallying cry for operational tactics as an idea, like all ideologies it has a set of intellectual bylaws. Chief among them would be faith in a narrow rationality. Society, much like Monopoly or other games, can be organized according to rational postulates. Wells holds this ace among his other cards. "The sustaining theme of my *Experiment in Autobiography* has been the development and consolidation of my *persona*, as a devotee . . . to the evolution of the Socialist World-State." The capstone of that work is entitled "The Idea of a Planned World." The idea of "planning," the praxis of rationality, is absolutely central to the liberal mind. Success is always due to "analysis and reasoned planning." We

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are living in a time "of more and more comprehensive plans." A planned World-State "has become imperative." It was apparent to even the most dull-pated liberal that Wells with his commitment to "brains" was on the right side.

He was also a certified, albeit part-time, meliorist, enamored as he was of the philosophy of progress. He wrote frequently of the impulses and movements of the world toward the "New Republic" that would result from A *Modern Utopia* (1905). "We are, as a species, caught in an irreversible process." The planned World-State is "as much a part of the frame in which our lives are set as the roundness and rotation of the earth." Wells's contempt for tradition, another mark of the liberal sensibility, was evident in his hysterical attack on the Catholic Church (1943), although he was not finally selective. All formal religion was rejected: "I am an outright atheist." His "religion," as he called it, was "a real fascination with the perhaps unattainable World-State I serve . . . the rational purpose of my life." The supremacy of the World-State explains Wells's statism—his eagerness for centralization and consolidation, a wiping out of all differences regional as well as national.

> Clustering is antipathetic to us. I have always been disposed to despise people who cluster close in families, gangs, clans and nations. That is my main objection to Jews. And Scotsmen. And the provincial French.

Attacking the right to private property was like a Masonic handshake among liberals. His attack came early and remained a persistent idea. The one thing that unites all socialists, he wrote, was "the wish to abolish private property in any but the most immediately personal things." Where Wells felt superior to his fellow socialists was in his discovery of the need for a "Competent Receiver" to replace private ownership when the socialist World-State was created through the "new pattern of revolution." "Revolution" was always his word when describing how the new state was to come about; I do not recall his using "reform" or "renewal." "Revolutionary change" would follow upon the sense of personal disaster felt by the multitudes who would then be ready to join the "Open Conspiracy" of "honest and creative-minded men." Like other liberals, Wells was infatuated with "a vivid sense of the promise and possibilities of change."

"His son's portrait of him as a man who 'transcended his origins and made himself a very big man indeed' is largely convincing."

Newsweek

The final intellectual bylaw of liberalism was its faith in science. That was Wells's first love, and it remained central to his sense of reality until the end. A startled University of London felt constrained, I imagine, to award him a D.Sc. for a thesis in pseudoscience he submitted when he was 78. The Royal Society, however, never made him a member. Science gave authority to the concept of planning, since it provided a rigid, if flawed, base for scheming, charting, and designing. Science was method and strategy. The inevitable revolution would produce "a new mechanical civilization" (*Socialism and the Scientific Motive*, 1923).

Anthony West, his son, is correct in his view that his father came to stand for everything that the experience of the 30's and 40's "had shown to be facile and false in liberal meliorism." West feels, however, that this view of his father in the public mind was wrong; he insists instead that Wells was one of the most influential ancestors of "the truly progressive outlook of today." Loyalty to parent has seldom been stretched so far to cover as much.

What is centrally false in liberalism—its sad little secret—was no secret in the writings of Wells: he was curiously open about his discomfort with and distrust of people. He did not "care a damn," as he put it, for most people. Belief in the masses was "sentimental." It was precisely on this point that the famous controversy on socialism in *The New Age* (1907-08) was waged by Gilbert and Cecil Chesterton and Hilaire Belloc, on one side, and G. B. Shaw, Belfort Bax, and Wells on the other.

The people, asserted Chesterton, are "absolutely and eternally right" in their instincts. "I believe very strongly in the mass of the common people. I do not mean their 'potentialities,' I mean in their faces, in their habits, and their admirable language." He was not a socialist, he testified, because he had "not lost faith in democracy." Wells had, I would contend, even though Anthony West argues that he had not, that his views, for instance, in the Sorbonne lecture, "Democracy Under Revision" (1927), were really wholesome if naive. "The time has come for the educated to save democracy from itself by becoming a political force." His views may have been naive—a common enough liberal fault—but they were clear. The autobiography repeats this idea and gives it central position in his thought. The intelligentsia of the world—"all of mankind that mattered"—were to commit themselves to the liberal-scientific consensus.

By putting themselves in positions to be consulted whenever and wherever political decisions were to be made, intellectuals would lead us to the World-State. "We originative intellectual workers [a beehive world?] are reconditioning human life" [pieces of furniture?]. Even the diction shows the dehumanizing result of the one kind of elitism that is always tyrannical. That the "genuine Socialist government" should be in the hands of an exclusive body of rulers, "the right sort," "a fraternity of enlightened minds," Wells emphasized as his special contribution to the world of the future.

His penchant for scientific planning and his contempt for "the proletarian masses" met in a suggestion made in A *Modern Utopia*: "For purposes of the state I propose a division into four types of character, the kinetic, the poietic, the dull, and the base." The kinetic were to be the effective rulers, having all executive and administrative power. The poietic were to suggest, criticize, help legislate, and help to control the base. The base were individuals of such strong antisocial disposition that they were inalterably excluded from office. The dull needed to be provided with incentive if they wished to engage in kinetic labors. These classes were not hereditary, but regulated by "the filtering processes of education and the tests of social life."

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The Order of the Samurai in this configuration of classes was special and exclusive. Membership was voluntary but made very difficult by qualifications and disciplinary tests. Such an order did not come about by itself; it could be realized only by deliberate effort. Early on, Wells's great hope was that the members of the Fabian Society would become the Samurai, embodying "for mankind a sense of the state." The Society's failure to grasp this opportunity caused Wells to confess that no part of his career rankled him as much as his involvement with the Fabians.

The idea of the Samurai brings to mind *The Magnificent Seven* and *The Seven Samurai*, and rightly so. On one level this idea is the result of boyish emotions—the secret club, exclusive membership, the password, the handshake—Tom Sawyer stuff. But on another level this boyish emotion could (and did) produce monsters. Wells, however, remained boyishly unaware of such dangers. Looking at the following passage (1934) offers a frightening glimpse into his naiveté.

> The experience of the thirty years that have passed since I launched this scheme [1906], and particularly the appearance of such successful organizations as the Communist Party and the Italian fascists has greatly strengthened my belief in the essential soundness of this conception of the governing order of the future. A Samurai Order educated in such an ideology as I have since tried to shape out, is inevitable if the modern World-State is ever to be fully realized. We want the world ruled not by everybody, but by a politically minded organization open, with proper safeguards, to everybody. The problem of world revolution and world civilization becomes the problem of crystallizing, as soon as possible, as many as possible of the right sort of individuals from the social magma, and getting them into effective, conscious co-operation.

While Wells was unable to find a way to make his Samurai Order real, he noted how successful Lenin was in shaping "an extraordinarily similar scheme, the reconstructed Communist Party." The Communist reality and Wells's proposal were alike, he noted, in their elitism and in their insistence "upon a training in directive ideas as part of the militant qualification." The reconstructed Communist Party "is alone sufficient to justify [the Russian] revolution."

It was not until the 40's that Wells was fully disillusioned with his plans and schemes. In *Mind at the End of Its Tether* (1945) he compared humankind to rats in a sack, desperately struggling and fighting. The decent, Edwardian, scientific, oh-so-sensible view crumbled under the assault of experience. The most that one can say is that he knew he had been wrong, but I do not think he ever knew why. He had always been aware of "the persistent wickedness of the human heart," but this partial insight became at the end a wickedness without relief, rhyme, or reason. He could only curse the darkness with "the conscious impotence of rage at human folly."

Wells did not fail simply because the right side turned out to be the wrong side; his failure to be great was inherently personal. His total absorption in himself was bound to be disastrous. He actually thought of himself as the one who had found "the pattern of the key to master our world and release its imprisoned promise." He stated candidly and clearly that "his obstinate self-conceit" was the chief factor in his survival. "I shall die, as I have lived, the responsible centre of my world." To see this as a virtue requires that one have an enormous ego or a most peculiar definition of "responsible."

It appears that he used just about everyone for his own purposes; he was particularly reprehensible in dehumanizing the multitudes of women in his life. Saul Bellow's Mr. Sammler described him as a "horney . . . little lower-class Limey." One of his long-term mistresses, though finally thrown over, commented on this aspect of his character. Odette Keun, admittedly hostile, reviewed the autobiography in *Time and Tide* (1934). West's summary of her review is excellent:

> He was, she said, in his writing what he was in everything else,

IN THE MAIL

Science Fiction in America, 1870's-1930's: An Annotated Bibliography of Primary Sources **by Thomas D. Clareson; Greenwood Press; Westport, CT.** Although the first entry is *Flatland* and the final is Zamiatin's *We*, the second and the penultimate are more telling: number two, *The Man With the Broken Ear*, includes a character who believes "that humans are watches"; number 837, *A Manless World*, tells of an impotent man's nightmare.

The Third Day **by Arnold Lunn; Roman Catholic Books; Harrison, NY.** In defense of Miracles writ large.

Reagancomics **edited by Carew Papritz and Russ Tremayne; Khyber Press; Seattle, WA.** The foreword to this collection of political cartoons is by Morely Safer and the introduction is from Ralph Nader. Who says there's a bias in the press?

How to Fire an Employee **by Daniel T. Kingsley; Facts on File Publications; New York.** The whisper of the axe.

Coin of the Realm: An Introduction to Numismatics **by James E. Spaulding; Nelson-Hall; Chicago.** "Some coin dates are fictitious, that is, they do not represent the true date of issue" [what else?]. Dubious value.

To Provide Safe Passage: The Humanistic Aspect of Medicine **edited by David Rabin and Pauline L. Rabin; Philosophical Library; New York.** "Most physicians have lost the pearl that was once an intimate part of medicine, and that is humanism." The contributors to this volume, mostly doctors and medical professors, suggest ways to recover this gem.

The Final Word! An American Refutes the Sayings of Ayatollah Khomeini **by James Lee; Philosophical Library; New York.** Since when has insanity required refutation?

Women of Wisdom **by Tsultrim Allione; Routledge & Kegan Paul; London.** The author, a former Buddhist nun, is busy turning religion into feminist cant. Even Zen meditation can't quiet some nonsense.

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like a child playing a game, or an actor reading a part. . . . She explored the defects of temperament and character that led to his 'ultimate and irrevocable failure to be great,' and deplored his self-indulgence, his instability, and his vanity. . . . He was enclosed within himself, and utterly unaware of others.

He lived his way so blithely because he was convinced that he "sustained the whole world upon his shoulders." He felt himself to be "Everyman." Had he been an Achilles instead of a Ulysses, one can only contemplate with horror the incredible amount of public damage he might have done.

While Wells is irrevocably part of the past, his very typicality made him, ironically enough, timeless in Saul Bellow's finest novel, *Mr. Sammler's Planet*. The figure of Wells plays a prominent role, symbolizing the failure of 20th-century liberal thought. In dramatizing the history of this century in his own life, old Artur Sammler remembers his own inclination toward liberalism during his years as a journalist in London between the wars. He had been on the edge of Wells's circle, but now he has grave doubts about his writings, about his world projects, about the molding of a universal order. "What kindhearted, ingenious, stupid schemes" they had been. Wells's faith had been in "Scientific humanism," in an "emancipated future," in "active benevolence, in reason, in civilization," but in the end he "could only blast and curse everyone." On the one hand, he was a man who "in his seventies was still obsessed with girls," and on the other a natural teacher, the explainer, who, alas, thought he should explain everything. He expressed as many views as he could, and at all times. "He was like Voltaire, a graphomaniac." In the novel the point is made that the future Wells thought he was serving turned out to be the last convulsions of the 18th and 19th centuries. For all his concerns with the future, the final irony is that Wells was bound to the past. What he saw as the promise of a new era was in fact the final decadence of an old one, the last spasms of a bankrupt modernism. cc

Scrambling the Schools *by Bryce J. Christensen*

"With the same cement, ever sure to bind,
We bring to one dead level ev'ry mind."
—Alexander Pope

John Dewey: *Types of Thinking*; Philosophical Library; New York.

William C. Ringenberg: *The Christian College: A History of Protestant Higher Education in America*; Christian University Press/William B. Eerdmans; Grand Rapids, MI.

As easy as it is to find a college graduate in modern America, it is hard to find a true university. Any *uni*-versity worthy of the name must be both universal in scope, attending to all important fields of knowledge, and unified in thought, bound together into a single coherent philosophical framework. Most contemporary "universities" are neither; very few are both.

The retreat from universality was well underway in 1852 when John Henry Cardinal Newman wrote *On the Scope and Nature of University Education*, still perhaps the best analysis of the premises, promises, and problems of modern higher education. Cardinal Newman was particularly disturbed that increasingly universities were excluding religion from their curricula. "Is it," Newman asked, "logically consistent in a seat of learning to call itself a university, and to exclude theology from the number of its studies?" Since theology "meets us with a profession and a proffer of the highest truths of which the human mind is capable," and since Christian premises inform virtually all of Western culture, Newman believed only a superficial approach to education can ignore religion.

Simply to ignore theology—the current practice in most American universities—is therefore, Newman reasons, to distort our perception of philosophy, history, literature, and natural science. It is "to impair the completeness and to invalidate the trustworthiness of all that is actually taught."

America's first centers of higher learning were initially only colleges. Still, their founders well understood that all studies should be unified within a shared religious conviction. As William C. Ringenberg observes in *The Christian College*, the founders of America's oldest universities sought to "create an environment in which the Christian faith and Christian morality influenced every aspect of the collegiate experience." Harvard's founders, for example, sought "to lay Christ in the bottom as the only foundation of all sound knowledge and learning." Yale's originators (who founded the school in the early 1700's when they saw Harvard drifting into Unitarian heresy) similarly declared: "Every student shall consider the main end of his study to wit to know God in Jesus Christ and answerably to lead a Godly, sober life."

Even when the states took the lead in founding colleges in the 1800's, it was assumed (until late in the century) that those schools would be "Protestant in nature and emphasis." Student attendance at chapel services was required, on penalty of expulsion, and professors could be dismissed if they "openly advocated a doctrine which is unauthorized by the Bible."

But as Mark Noll remarks in his excellent introduction to *The Christian College*, a "new university" had emerged by 1900 which "in almost every way imaginable . . . undercut the traditional values of Christian

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higher education in America." Not only was this the case in state schools, but also in most of the older Protestant universities, such as Harvard, Yale, Princeton, Columbia, Rutgers, and Brown. Once more Christian in their convictions than was society, America's major universities have become "considerably more secular than is the populace in general," Ringenberg contends. As a consequence, though higher education was often accompanied by a religious conversion in the 1700's and early 1800's, it is now more likely to weaken students' faith. (One is almost tempted to say that America's religious commitment is declining by degrees.) Since most universities are supported by the taxes of millions of devout Christians and Jews, this anti-religious bias constitutes a serious cultural injustice.

The reasons America's universities have become secularized are diverse. In the case of the state schools, the arrival of large Jewish and Catholic immigrant communities in the mid-1800's made necessary a new understanding of the separation of church and state. Protestant Christianity "ceased to be the integrating center of the educational process," Ringenberg notes. But to account for the almost simultaneous secularization of the major Protestant universities, other causes must be sought.

Part of the problem is simply that "knowledge puffeth up." As Newman sagely remarked, "Knowledge viewed as knowledge, exerts a subtle influence in throwing us back on ourselves, and making us our own centre, and our minds the measure of all things." This, Newman conceded, was a natural "tendency of that liberal education of which a university is the school" and must be held in check by the authority and dogma of the Church. If the proposition that dogma is essential for a proper education seems puzzling, then perhaps it is necessary to recall with G. K. Chesterton that for Newman dogma implies not "the absence of thought, but the end of thought."

While the teaching status of Newman's Catholic Church was fairly well defined, the usual Protestant reliance upon individual judgment and the de-emphasis of institutional discipline make it especially hard for Protestant schools to stand against the winds of secularism. It comes as no surprise that Ringenberg finds that those few Protestant colleges that have best resisted secularization are those under the close control of some particular denomination. Certainly, most Catholic universities have become markedly more secular in pursuing post-Vatican II ecumenism.

Perhaps the most fundamental challenge confronting a Christian college, though, is that the gospel has often appeared to be "foolishness" to the learned, as the Apostle Paul early observed. Its origins are not with man, nor can it be explained in terms of "the wisdom of the world." Christians may become scholars without surrendering their convictions, but the temptation to intellectual respectability is strong. Just as the ancient Israel wanted to "be like all the other nations," despite prophetic counsel against conformity, even so the modern Christian university often yearns to be like all the other universities in academic orientation.

The desire for intellectual credibility may have been a motivation among those Scholastics who integrated Scripture and Ptolemaic astronomy —with disastrous long-term consequences. Similarly, Noll notes that the willingness of Protestants to accept fashionable Enlightenment arguments for Christian conclusions led to disaster when evolution and pragmatism repudiated not only Christianity but also Newtonian science and the whole "didactic Enlightenment" paradigm. Like Galileo's opponents in the 17th century, most "theologically conservative" Christians in the late 1800's and early 1900's were defending not the fundamental doctrines of revelation but instead an outmoded synthesis. The defeat of conservative Christian apologists in the educational and cultural battles of this century was inevitable. Protestant schools that did not quickly secularize were soon swept into obscure backwaters, where most remain today. "In an age when the thinking which shapes world views comes regularly from research universities," Noll writes, "evangelicals [i.e., doctrinally committed Protestants] do not have a single research university or the serious prospect of one."

But in the absence of a theological superstructure, America's research universities can offer only very incoherent and fragmented world views. America's universities have degenerated, as Ringenberg suggests, into "polyversities," with no meaningful relationship between their competing disciplines. Only ubiquitous concern for the success of the football program unites the life of most major universities. The decision to ignore religious truth has resulted, as Newman predicted, in "nothing short . . . of unraveling the web of the university."

Scattered and tangled, the threads of higher (and lower) education fell in this century into the hands of irreligious woolgatherers like John Dewey. Part of the first generation of scholars to take a Ph.D. from an American university (Johns Hopkins, 1884), Dewey exercised a tremendous influence over American pedagogy on all levels during his career as a professor at the University of Michigan, the University of Chicago, and Columbia. The destructiveness of his influence is evident in the sloppy and myopic commentary Dewey offers in *Types of Thinking*, a translation of lectures Dewey gave in China in 1919-21 and previously unavailable except in the Chinese transcriptions.

The false assumptions, non sequiturs, and evasions in which Dewey indulges in this survey of ancient and modern philosophy are legion. Not

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surprisingly, Dewey defends the ancient sophists as a misunderstood and unfairly maligned group who deserve praise for their "new approaches" in education. (Dewey even includes Sophocles among the sophists.) Such absurdities would be amusing if they were not characteristic of much of what passes for education in America.

Looking at the efforts of the ancient Greeks to overcome social turmoil, Dewey concluded that "Philosophy . . . is born of confusion." Dewey's philosophy, however, is different: it begets rather than resolves confusion. For Dewey, there is not much worth salvaging in Plato or Aristotle, since these thinkers believed in absolute truth, eternal principles and—worst of all—hierarchal societies. He laments the lack of empirical observation in Cartesian thought, but is glad for Descartes's weakening of religion through the repudiation of final causes. With Locke, Dewey begins to warm. Locke's reverence for the individual, he finds valuable, and Locke's repudiation of transcendence is essential. And once Locke's empiricism is modified so that it is active and experimental rather than merely passive and receptive, Dewey has the premises for his own philosophy: pragmatism.

But experimental pragmatism, even as expounded by Dewey's more talented and intelligent mentor William James, can never provide a basis for good education, or even for consistent, moral thought. In replacing "Is it true?" with "Does it work?" pragmatism leaves unanswered the question "Work *to what end?*" Pragmatism can never set its own agenda, but must forever be a captive to those who, for *pre*-experimental reasons, have some work to do. Increasingly, the agenda has been set by political radicals and moral revolutionaries. Dewey might not have endorsed any of these efforts. But it was merely because, shaped in a still largely Christian culture, he was a man of the sort Coleridge described as "better than their principles." And while the gentlemanly agnostic Dewey has been dead for over 30 years, his pedagogical principles are still regnant.

In a feeble attempt to adduce some purpose for the ongoing activity of pragmatic experimentation, Dewey invokes the Darwinian concept of survival. But as an organizing principle for education, survival does not commend itself. Besides, men taught to regard survival as the highest good will surely become immoral in a crisis. In the Gulag, for instance, Solzhenitsyn relates that every prisoner had to decide whether to honor his conscience or to survive by becoming an informant for the camp authorities. Anyone schooled in Deweyian pragmatism could only have become a stooge.

But it is not only *in extremis* that pragmatism fails. Meaningful day-to-day life requires goals beyond mere survival, goals that may guide experimentation, but cannot derive from it. When Dewey sings the praises of individual "creativity" and "invention," when he affirms a radical "pluralism" in which each person is invited "to create his own future world," he is vainly trying to paper over pragmatism's cognitive nihilism. Dewey's students *have* to create their own worlds, for pragmatism can tell them nothing about communal or normative reality.

The failure to instruct—rather than pander to—individual caprice manifests itself throughout American education today. This failure accounts for the simultaneous rise in grades and decline in student performance. It is the reason, too, for the replacement of mandatory courses by electives. As Flannery O'Connor once wryly observed, "Ours is the first age in history which has asked [the student] what he would tolerate learning." Predictably, subjects such as mathematics, physics, and Latin—where "creativity" cannot mask ignorance—are less tolerable than classes in "social problems" or creative writing. Students must be protected from disciplines which provide a rigorous pattern for development rather than a flattering mirror. (Educational theorists prattle endlessly about "improving the student's self-image" through "positive feedback.") The result is high school graduates very proud of themselves and their diploma—which incidentally they can't read. But again Newman anticipated the trouble. When education is torn loose from religion, he observed, students invariably become "victims of an intense self-contemplation."

Attacking Plato's hopelessly elitist and prescriptive approach to education, Dewey insisted that "education must undertake to meet a person's individual needs, and to develop to the fullest possible measure whatever potentials the individual may possess." And what if the individual's needs, as he himself perceives them, incline toward, say, extortion or child pornography? What then? Most extortionists and child pornographers, after all, do have a strong self-image (and a shamelessly weak *others*-image).

The perfectly decent Dewey would have strongly objected to such debased individual preferences, but his philosophy would have provided him with no grounds for his objections except his *own* personal preference. Fortunately, most students do not use the license contemporary schooling often gives them to become extortionists or pornographers. But despite the ceaseless efforts to prop up their self-image, many young people discover—as any Christian could have told them—that the self is radically flawed and insufficient. Informed by bankrupt pedagogues that their only option is to "Believe in yourselves," they become self-loathers and fall into despair. And though implementation of Dewey's educational program may have helped to fuel a skyrocketing teenage suicide rate, the predictable response of some groups has been to agitate for Federally mandated high school courses to deal with the problem. If such courses are ever set up, both their dismal subject and their self-defeating survivalist orientation will bear the mark of John Dewey. ∞

LIBERAL ARTS

When You Call Me That, Smile

Grady Hillman Jr. has been conducting poetry workshops in Texas prisons. As he explained recently in *Texas Arts*, prison conditions encourage critical restraint:

> I created a workshop where people could freely give and take criticism. . . . Someone can say, 'I do not like your poem . . . ' but they would learn how to give that criticism in such a way that that person would not want to knock them off. ∞

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RENASCENCE

"A New Mimesis: Art and Literature As An Imitation of Nature"

Vol. 37, No. 3 Spring 1985

Renascence, a quarterly in its 37th year of publication, is a critical and scholarly journal concerned with the study of values in literature. The editorial perspective is Christian thought and values without limitation to subject matter.

Editor: Joseph Schwartz, Professor of English, Marquette University

The Spring Issue of **Renascence** is devoted to a working paper, "A New Mimesis," by Reverend John Boyd, S.J. He suggests that literature, as well as all art, is inherently mimetic. Aristotle used the term "mimesis" to mean an imitation of nature; Boyd broadens "mimesis" to include the imitation of being.

John Boyd, S.J.

John Boyd, S.J. is Professor of English at Fordham University. He is the author of *The Function of Mimesis and Its Decline.* The current essay is a taste of his forthcoming book *Mimesis Revisited.*

Respondents

J. Robert Barth, S.J.
Gerald L. Bruns
W. Norris Clarke, S.J.
Victor Hamm
Harry R. Klocker, S.J.
John McCabe
Ralph McInerny
A.D. Nuttall
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"New Mimesis" Issue of Renascence

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*Vol. 38 will include a special issue devoted to David Jones

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THE RETURN OF THE GRAND INQUISITOR *by Mihajlo Mihajlov*

"Without the spiritual rebirth no political changes will make people free. But the spiritual rebirth, a Christian *rebirth, is the ascent of a free man, and not of Russian nationalism, the cult of homeland, fatherland, and one's country."*

—Mihajlo Mihajlov in "Some Timely Thoughts" (written in 1974 in response to *Letter to the Soviet Leaders* by Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn

I recently had the opportunity to meet with one of the leaders of the AFL-CIO, and the conversation somehow turned to Solzhenitsyn's latest political articles. This leader expressed his negative opinion of the articles in no uncertain terms. Since at that time I still hadn't read the article "The Mortal Danger: How Misconceptions About Russia Imperil America" (*Foreign Affairs*), I remained silent. However, I must confess that I was astonished and saddened by this man's remark. For decades the AFL-CIO has very strongly supported and continues to lend support to dissident and human rights movements in all communist countries. It was none other than the leaders of the AFL-CIO, including this man, who organized extremely significant public appearances for Solzhenitsyn a few years ago. And though I by no means agree with the ideological and political views of Aleksandr Isaevich, I nevertheless found the American union leader's sharp criticism unpleasant. All dissidents had for too long identified our struggle with the struggle and brilliant triumph of the *Gulag Archipelago*'s author.

Of course, I soon obtained Solzhenitsyn's article and read it. And, I must confess, my sadness vanished completely, and I even felt joy and a burst of optimism because this influential American union leader had reacted so unfavorably to Solzhenitsyn's political views. On the contrary—after reading the article in *Foreign Affairs*, I would have been depressed if an American union leader had a favorable opinion of it.

In his article "How Misconceptions About Russia Imperil America" Solzhenitsyn expands and reiterates all of his main political ideas, which were expressed earlier in his 1974 "Letter to the Soviet Leaders," in his much-talked-of Harvard speech (1978), in his *Time* magazine article "Communism; Everyone Sees It and Doesn't Understand," and in all his interviews dealing with political issues. One can easily characterize the article in *Foreign Affairs* as Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's definitive credo.

Of course, I cannot help agreeing with Solzhenitsyn that the Western democracies' policies in relation to totalitarianism often engender pessimism in the thoughtful observer. However, I must confess that, in my opinion, Solzhenitsyn's views on how to resist totalitarian communism can engender even greater pessimism. It is just this unique mixture of correct and incorrect, true and false, that makes Solzhenitsyn's ideological-political appeals so dangerous.

But what exactly is the danger in Solzhenitsyn's views? Ever since communism has existed, the debate on how to resist it has gone on uninterrupted. In essence, there are two ideological-political conceptions. One, which could be called international-democratic, is based on the conviction that one can only resist the international evil of communist totalitarianism with international associations that fight for a pluralistic democratic society, personal freedom, and what is today called human rights.

Despite the long-standing newspaper agitation by the liberals that Solzhenitsyn so disdains, one must say that up until now this international democratic conception has never taken precedence anywhere over the second ideological conception. Only for a few months at the beginning of Carter's Presidency did it appear that the worldwide struggle for human rights would become the determining factor in the Western democracies' resistance to communist totalitarianism. However, it soon became apparent that the human rights struggle was only a temporary means, and in no way the end, even of the American government.

The second ideological-political course, which could be called national-authoritarian, dates from 1917. Unfortunately, even today it determines strategy and tactics in the Western democracies' struggle against communism. I see as the main danger in Solzhenitsyn's latest political statements

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Mihajlo Mihajlov, who spent seven years in Tito's jails, is the author of Underground Notes *(Caratzas Brothers). "The Return of the Grand Inquisitor," translated by Melinda Segal, is part of a forthcoming book,* Tyranny and Freedom.

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the fact that, while criticizing the Western democracies for allegedly following an international-democratic policy, he systematically replaces the struggle for freedom and the rights of each individual with the struggle for nationalism and the rights of nations. Solzhenitsyn seems unaware that regardless of the discussion about democracy and human rights, the foreign policy of the Western democratic countries, including the U.S., is unfortunately still determined by purely national interests. The result is that the democratic world is retreating in the face of totalitarianism on all fronts.

It is entirely logical that if revival of nationalism is paramount in the struggle against communist totalitarianism, then democracy would also come under attack. The fact is that *no national democracy exists, and never can exist*. Democracy itself is based on equality of rights, which are independent of national, religious, ideological, racial, or political identity. Thus, *democracy is always international*, and the fact that Western democratic states are unfortunately still pursuing a foreign policy that emphasizes their national interests is their greatest shortcoming and inconsistency. Solzhenitsyn advocates sanctioning this shortcoming.

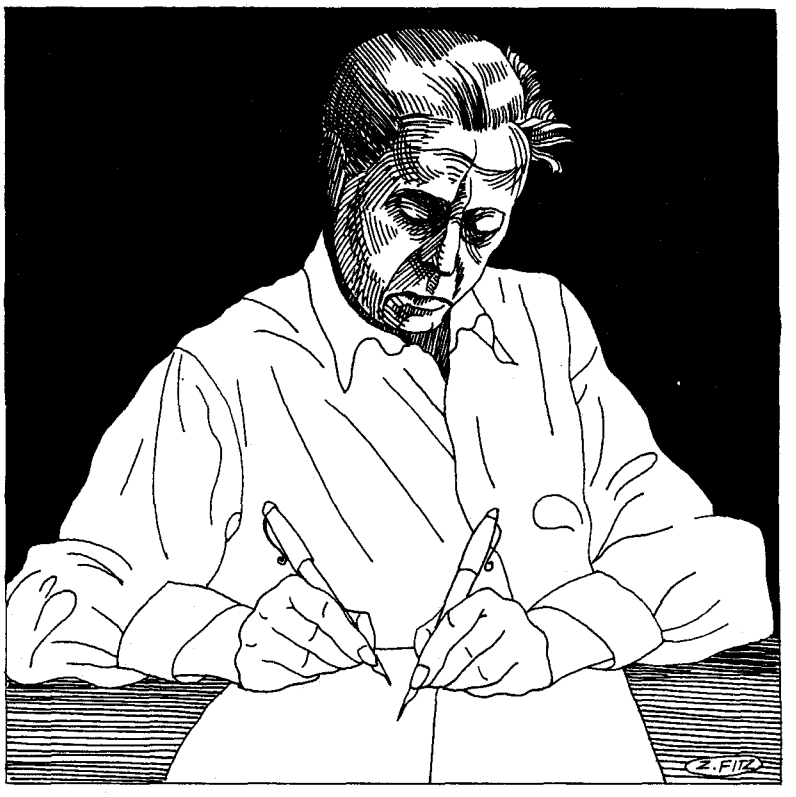
Solzhenitsyn is correct in his attack upon widespread misunderstandings about communism. One such mistake is the failure to understand the full malignancy of communism's threat to mankind and the impossibility of finding "better variants" of communism. Either communism will spread through humanity like cancer and destroy it, or mankind will rid itself of it. Solzhenitsyn is also correct in saying that it is wrong to identify the communist threat with the Soviet Union alone, as is the case at present. The West virtually ignores the tragedy of Chinese or Yugoslav communism.

I completely agree with Solzhenitsyn that "Communism will never be halted by negotiations or through the machinations of détente. It can be halted only by force from without or by disintegration from within." But what is needed is an international approach to the problem of communism. The democratic countries' identification of communism with the Russian people is only a remnant of the former's nationalism, although certainly it is antithetical to Solzhenitsyn's brand of nationalism. Solzhenitsyn is correct in pointing out that the West does not understand the nature of communism, but how he explains totalitarianism, and most importantly, how he chooses to struggle against it, is in no way better than the West's methods.

It is no longer a secret for anyone in today's world that there exists an ideological conflict in the dissident movement in the Soviet Union and the West, a conflict that arises out of attitudes toward the so-called rebirth of nationalism. Although one cannot accuse people such as Milovan Djilas or Andrei Sakharov of malice toward Russia, any ideological criticism of Solzhenitsyn's nationalist views provokes just such an accusation of hatred toward Russia. It also sometimes elicits transparent hints that those who disagree with Solzhenitsyn wish to introduce a "schism" in the anticommunist movement, and therefore are agents of the KGB or are at least playing into their hands.

This view is reminiscent of the Soviet ban on criticizing "one's own" when "surrounded by the enemy." Solzhenitsyn writes that the "renaissance of the Russian national consciousness is the one thing that can resist communism from within." Almost at the same time, Sakharov, in his Gorky exile, writes: "I am convinced that the nationalist ideology is dangerous and destructive even in its, at first glance, more human 'dissident' forms." Commentaries and analysis dealing with the totally antithetical ideological aims of these two renowned dissidents are nowhere to be found in the free Russian *émigré* press. Any attempt at open discussion provokes accusations of trying to bring about a split. Sakharov and Djilas are evidently spared these accusations only because they are on the very front line of the struggle against communist totalitarianism.

In my opinion, attempts by proponents of a national ideology to squelch and conceal any criticism is occasion for the most serious alarm. In this atmosphere criticism is ignored, and people falsely suppose unanimity of opinion among dissidents.



Let me begin my critique of Solzhenitsyn's views by pointing out his constant confusion of religious, spiritual, national, Orthodox, and Christian rebirth. This device helps shield the so-called rebirth of nationalism from criticism. If one mixes everything, as Solzhenitsyn does, and writes first about the rebirth of nationalism, then about the Christian renaissance, now about the Orthodox renaissance, now about the religious renaissance—if one never makes a distinction between one concept and another —then it is of course possible to interpret criticism of nationalism as criticism of the religious renaissance, and even of spiritual rebirth in general. It is necessary to emphasize that nationalism and the religious renaissance

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have nothing in common. Although Russian, Serbian, and Rumanian Orthodoxy exist, there is not, was not, nor can there ever be any Russian Christianity or Russian religion. Christianity was the first universal religion in history, and it therefore found itself in conflict with a national religion —Judaism.

I would particularly remind Solzhenitsyn of Hegel's words to the effect that before Christ there existed peoples, and after Christ—individuals. It was, therefore, these Christian roots that made it possible for the first universal democracy —the United States—to flourish, since democracy is possible only where freedom of the individual is prized above all other values. It is true that the rebirth of nationalism occurred at the time of spiritual renaissance and coincided in general with the rebirth of everything that had been driven underground for decades in Russia. One can also observe in the Soviet Union in the last decade the revival of all kinds of Christian and non-Christian sects, theosophy, spiritualism, jazz, abstract painting, and even drug addiction. But will Solzhenitsyn come to mix all the above and employ now one concept, now another, as he does now with national, religious, spiritual, Christian, and Orthodox renaissance?

Mixing religion and nationality is particularly dangerous, and Solzhenitsyn constantly does exactly this. In our day, a religious or church monopoly would be a hundred times worse than an atheistic one. The Spanish Inquisition with today's technology—this would be more totalitarian than the Soviet Union. It is the programmatic atheism which is the weakest point of communist totalitarianism in that it makes it more difficult to use the religious impulse, which is inherent in man, in the service of evil.

From beginning to end of his recent article, Solzhenitsyn repeats the words "nationalism, national self-consciousness, the national spirit, the national soul," etc., and the object of his whole article is to prove that nationalism alone, and Russian nationalism in particular, is the one force that can resist communist totalitarianism and save the entire planet. One need not be a communist to consider nationalism, any nationalism, evil. I see a far greater danger in a possible revival of the Russian nationalist ideology than in the existing Marxist-Leninist ideology. The truth is simply that, except for the millions of poor in South America, no one really believes the Soviet communists anymore. In our time, communism stays in power only through sheer physical force. The national idea, like all ideas that have been forbidden in the Soviet Union for decades, can still attract many people, all the more so after the lengthy forced isolation from all the spiritual currents of the West. The danger of nationalism is not simply that it can be used by communist powers, as occurred in World War II. Nationalism's main danger is that it undermines the principles which provide the only possible basis for resisting global totalitarianism.

Communist internationalism, despite its "proletarian" narrowness, is nonetheless the first worldwide movement in recent history to have universal goals. For the thinking person, the creation of a single world society in our time is beyond doubt. Although in the 19th century English and French colonial troops could be at war in Africa while France and England did not fight in Europe, in our day the least political shift in some microscopic Pacific Island state immediately is echoed throughout the entire world and influences the fate of all mankind. It is precisely this planetarization of mankind as a whole, this necessity for a supranational ideology, that gave fuel to the communist movement in the 20th century. And no national movement can resist an international one. Solzhenitsyn is repeating a half century later the mistakes of all anticommunists who opposed communism from a precommunist position. The present state of affairs, i.e., almost two-thirds of mankind in totalitarian subjugation, is a consequence of the mistaken idea that nationalism can resist communist internationalism.

The civil war in Yugoslavia can serve as an example of what is wrong with nationalism. The nationalist forces of the Serbs, Croats, Slovenes, and Albanians taken together were far larger than the communist forces. The communists nevertheless won, due to internecine war and the absence of a supranational approach to resisting the communist dictatorship. Yugoslavia in this sense can serve as a prototype of the contemporary world situation. If no supranational democratic movement emerges, if a universal, international worldwide struggle to defend individual rights is not born, then the communists will triumph around the world. Marxist internationalism is a false answer, but to a completely legitimate question. And this question is the question of the intellectual and spritual foundations for uniting humankind in a single society. If this world society is not pluralistic and democratic, then it can only be totalitarian; there is no third alternative.

In Solzhenitsyn's literary works the human spirit is the most profound reality, but as soon as Solzhenitsyn ceases to be an artist and starts to speak in the ideological-political sphere, everything that he so powerfully describes in his works simply vanishes. One single reality—the nation —remains. And it turns out that communism spearheads the struggle, not against the freedom of each individual, but only against national existence. Solzhenitsyn in general sees no other motivation for human actions than "the search for one's religious and national roots."

Solzhenitsyn is so sure of this that he even writes: "Throughout history only national characters created societies." He writes this while living in a country that he acknowledges is still the strongest bastion of anticommunism, a country founded by those who saw in spiritual freedom a value higher than remaining in their native land.

Looking over Solzhenitsyn's works in my mind, I somehow can't recall the image of a Russian nationalist at all. Among the prisoners that Solzhenitsyn describes in *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*, *The First Circle*, *The Gulag Archipelago*, hundreds are delineated with great artistry and power: Socialist Revolutionaries, those affiliated with every sort of intraparty opposition, religious people, foreigners, Ukranian and Baltic nationalists, "true Leninists" (those, including Solzhenitsyn, who once criticized Stalin from a Marxist-Leninist position). One recalls Solzhenitsyn's descriptions of ex-Vlasov followers, captured Germans, Russian anticommunist *émigrés* who had voluntarily returned from the West, Russians who worked on the Chinese Eastern Railroad (put into the camps wholesale),

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the occasional monarchist, dispossessed kulaks, and many others. And still I cannot recall the image of a Russian nationalist. Russian nationalism of the type that Solzhenitsyn advocates is in some senses a completely new phenomenon. Throughout the entire 19th century, during the flourishing of Russia's culture, one can literally count on the fingers of one hand all the prominent Russian cultural figures who championed "national consciousness." It has already become a cliché that the unsurpassed value of great Russian literature lies in its ability to embrace all humanity, its Christian universalism: not in Russian nationalism. And this is completely understandable; nationalism is an unhealthy reaction of oppressed and offended people and nations, and, therefore, small peoples are much more receptive to a nationalist ideology than large ones are.

If we seriously believe Solzhenitsyn, that prerevolutionary Russia really was such a wonderful, healthy, free country, it is not entirely clear how this can be so: after all, the Russian empire was distinctly multinational. Under communist totalitarianism, it does not matter in the slightest whether or not a state is multinational. Just as multinational and ethnically homogenous democratic countries exist, there are also multinational totalitarian states and ethnically homogenous totalitarian states. Only cultures can be national, not sociopolitical or state systems. A sociopolitical system can only be democratic or nondemocratic. In ethnically homogenous Albania there is no more freedom than in the multinational Soviet Union. Democratic Denmark and Norway differ little from the democratic and multinational United States. To see in the renaissance of the idea of a national state a panacea against totalitarianism is simply absurd, the more so since the large national unions that have formed in the course of history, such as France, Spain, and England, are shaken by the rebirth of small-scale, local nationalist feelings (for example, the Bretons, Corsicans, Basques, Scots, Welsh, etc.). This process shows that even without any communist influence the breaking up of large national organisms is occurring, and mankind is being prepared for general unification. Of course, this goes against the grain of those who support contemporary mini-nationalisms, those who lead the struggle against the large national unions. I am deeply convinced that if Solzhenitsyn's ideas on the renaissance of Russia as a national state were put into practice, one could very soon observe in Russia the same thing that is happening in France, Spain, and England: that is, the rebirth or birth of local "nationalisms" with ideas of an independent "Cossackia" or "Urals," countries that exist at present only in U.S. congressional resolutions. Even the nationalism of democratic countries has outlived its time. Things are now moving toward a polarization on a worldwide scale between such societies as multinational democratic America (with a pluralism of all possible cultures and traditions) and the multinational but totalitarian systems

REVISIONS

Mugging the Libertines

It is good to have Edmund Burke's A *Vindication of Natural Society* (edited by Frank N. Pagano; Liberty Classics; Indianapolis) in print, in such a handsome edition. The work is of particular interest, since it is the only volume of political theory published by the most celebrated founder of modern conservative thought. Written in the form of a letter from an elderly nobleman, Burke's little essay has been read both as a radical piece of natural rights theory and as a satire on the consequences of religious and political skepticism. In later years, Burke indicated that his intention was to ridicule Bolingbroke's attack on religion by showing that the same course of reasoning, if applied to politics, would overturn all settled order. Most conservatives have assumed that Burke meant what he said; others have taken it as proof positive of Burke's early radicalism.

Even if Burke intended satire, his essay takes up a very serious subject. The noble writer argues that man, in an original state of nature, suffered from a monotonous diet and an inability to resolve differences. Natural society, the result of sex and procreation, was "founded in natural Appetites and Instincts."

Our great mistake lay in not knowing where to stop. Instead of resting content with a social organization at the family level, we had to extend our activity and create political society, which is responsible for all the evils the world has known: injustice, cruelty, war, revolution, oppression, and intolerance. It does not matter which sort of government we suffer under—monarchy, aristocracy, or democracy. They are all alike, all evil. Most of the work is taken up with a recital of butcheries and horrors from ancient and modern history, a catalog of crimes to prove that "Political Society is justly chargeable with much the greatest part of this Destruction of the Species." Even the apparent conveniences of civil life—laws, for example—prove, upon closer inspection, to be mere engines of torture and oppression. Only one conclusion seems possible: shun politics and rebel against artificial society.

The greatest usefulness of Burke's essay (however he intended it to be read) lies in its extremism. It represents one logical course of development for natural rights—libertarian anarchy. The other course—the totalitarian state—seems worse, only because it actually confronts us from the other side of the Berlin Wall; but for most of us, it takes only one mugging to destroy our illusions about natural society. cc

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(with their total repression of all national cultures and traditions). The renaissance of Russian nationalism is no way out of the totalitarian cul-de-sac. It is rather an attempt to return to a pretotalitarian, precommunist epoch.

The return to the pre-Christian idea of the "national spirit" quite naturally leads to criticizing democracy and extolling an authoritarian system. Although, in his *Foreign Affairs* essay, Solzhenitsyn claims that he does not have a final opinion with regard to choosing a democratic or an authoritarian system for the future Russia, he criticizes not only democracy's shortcomings, but the very idea of democracy. In this sense, this article is something basically new in principle in relation to his previous political statements. He writes: "According to age old traditional Russian ideas, the truth cannot be determined by voting, since the majority does not necessarily have any deeper insight into the truth. (And what we know of mass psychology would suggest that the reverse is often true)." He also observes:

> I cannot count among the virtues of democracy its impotence vis-à-vis small groups of terrorists, its inability to prevent the growth of organized crime, or to check capitalists' unrestrained profiteering at the expense of public morality. And I would note that the terrifying phenomenon of totalitarianism, which has been born into our world perhaps four times, did not issue from authoritarian systems, but in each case from a weak democracy; the one created by the February Revolution in Russia, the Weimar and the Italian republics, and Chiang Kaishek's China. The majority of governments in human history have been authoritarian, but they have yet to give birth to a totalitarian regime.

It is quite true that democracies have not yet found a means of fighting terrorism, but neither have authoritarian countries. Despite all the outbursts of terrorism in Western Europe, it is not to be compared with the terrorism in right-wing authoritarian countries in South America. Only a totalitarian system can successfully combat terrorism, itself being a terrorist power. Only Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin, and Mao Tse-tung have eliminated organized crime.

To maintain that authoritarian countries have never given rise to totalitarian regimes is simply nonsense. Totalitarianism is a 20th-century phenomenon, and Solzhenitsyn's assertion is no more justified than if one said that the wars of the Middle Ages were more humanitarian than today's wars, since their participants never dropped an atomic bomb. On the contrary, all, absolutely all, the contemporary totalitarian countries are countries with age-old authoritarian traditions, countries which were not able to become democratic at the crucial time.

Not one single democratic country ever fell to communism, if one doesn't count the Soviet conquests in Eastern Europe during World War II. It is also necessary to emphasize that the German nation did not choose Hitler as a dictator; Hitler, after his party's success in the elections, and after he became chancellor, in essence staged a coup and drove out the opposition parties. In general, there is nothing to say about Chinese democracy. However, it must not be forgotten that the slaughter of all leftist elements in Shanghai and Canton at the end of the 20's marked the beginning of a lengthy civil war that brought the communists to power. One can say with good reason that authoritarianism prepares and fertilizes the soil for totalitarianism. Of course, one cannot simply call a totalitarian system the *continuation* of an authoritarian one; one can, however, compare the above with the relationship between smoking and lung cancer. Lung cancer is in no case the *continuation* of smoking, but smoking lays the foundation for it.

While a democratic system does not eliminate the possibility for the flowering of national cultures and national uniqueness (take for example France and Japan, democratic countries from two different worlds), societies where the idea and sovereignty of national existence are placed higher than the rights of the individual cannot but be authoritarian. For example, Solzhenitsyn worships the idea of eternal Russia, and someone else prefers smoked sausage. In a democratic society such disagreements are normal and cause no friction because freedom of the individual is the cornerstone of democracy. If "national existence" becomes the cornerstone of society, then there is a natural impetus to create an authoritarian system, since there is no other way to force people to bow down to one single value or at least pretend that they do. Solzhenitsyn refers to what he has in mind as "an authoritarian order founded on love of man . . . an authoritarianism with a firm real legality that reflects the will of the people . . . a calm and stable system which does not degenerate into arbitrariness and tyranny . . . a renunciation of psychiatric violence and secret trials, and of that brutal, immoral trap which the camps represent . . . the toleration of all religions . . . free art and literature, the untrammeled publication of books." Yet a firm real legality that reflects the will of the people, a system which does not degenerate into arbitrariness and tyranny, and the other freedoms, already really exists, but exists only in a democratic society. *By definition*, there has never been, is not, and can never be such an authoritarian system. But what if from "what we know of mass psychology" the majority would not place the interests of "eternal Russia" above, say, personal freedom, what if they would start to form the political parties that Solzhenitsyn opposes? Then what happens to all these freedoms? Or do freedoms only apply to those who recognize Solzhenitsyn's own ideology.

Solzhenitsyn is, of course, correct in saying that one cannot find the truth by voting, but no one ever seeks to find the truth through the voting process. Voting determines the goals and methods of a democratic society; these of course do not have anything in common with the search for truth. And there is nothing more dangerous than to link political life with the question of truth. It is the same whether we are talking about "the one true Marxist world view" or "the eternal, unchanging truths of the orthodox church." Be that as it may, in a society where freedoms such as those that Solzhenitsyn ascribes to his imaginary authoritarian system exist, political parties would immediately be formed.

Because he shares many of Solzhenitsyn's views, Aleksandr Ginzburg could neatly separate freedom and democ-

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racy in a speech made in Paris five years ago: "I therefore think that the present dialog about a future democracy in Russia is simply idle dispute; and that freedom will come to our country before democracy; if we will be able to achieve freedom we will then decide which system we will have in the future, but that time is still very far off." How similar all this is to the Soviet negation of "the formal democracy of the bourgeois world," the Soviet certitude that only if one possesses the "one true ideology" can one comprehend the deep essence of things.

How can one not remember the brilliant G. D. Fedotov's words: "We live among people who have made out of the negation of Bolshevism their creed. In essence many of us are fully ready for an authoritarian system—only not a communist one, of course. For many what is more important is not freedom, but the symbols in whose name freedom is violated. They prefer the symbol of the nation to the symbol of the proletariat, the two-headed eagle to the hammer and sicle."

It is completely consistent from a national-authoritarian standpoint to proclaim right-wing dictatorships in the Philippines and South Korea to be bastions of anticommunism. Whereas workers' strikes and the demands of the intelligentsia for freedom of speech and free elections in Poland and other countries are viewed positively, these same workers' strikes and statements of the intelligentsia in right-wing authoritarian countries are regarded, in typical Soviet spirit, as provocations by communist agents. It turns out that the threat from neighboring communist countries justifies self-limitation of freedom: the introduction of a dictatorship. In South Vietnam, this was exactly how they justified the severe limitation of democratic freedoms and the postponement of free elections as far back as Ngo Din Diem's time. There is no historical example of a country falling under communist rule where democracy was not "self-limited," where the Communist Party had not been banned. Right-wing authoritarian countries are simply the fifth column of communist totalitarianism. A struggle is taking place between democracy and totalitarianism, and any "self-limitation" of democracy and freedom is only to the benefit of totalitarianism. *From this perspective, the prohibition of the Communist Party is the first step toward a communist dictatorship.* Whereas authoritarian countries with weak democratic traditions easily become communist totalitarianism, all our experience in opposing communist dictatorships in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union shows that the only direction in which a movement away from communist totalitarianism is possible is toward a legitimate democratic, pluralistic system, never an authoritarian system. The priest Meerson-Aksenov eloquently wrote on the reasons for this: "A new and a very firm basis for democracy has appeared on the Soviet scene, a basis that it seems that very many countries and cultures with long liberal traditions lack. This basis is the *experience* of totalitarianism, ideological demagoguery, and universal suffering, the experience of the tragic absence of individual rights in the face of force."

Despite the urging of Solzhenitsyn and people of like mind, it appears that this experience of totalitarianism will be the strongest obstacle to the emergence of authoritarianism in Russia or in any other country that has endured communist totalitarianism. All of us on earth have absolutely equal rights, independent of any national affiliation. It is quite symptomatic that an advanced, developed country such as Sweden is conducting a very successful campaign to ensure that not only Swedish citizens but also workers from southern European countries who come to Sweden for a limited time freely participate in political life and enjoy equal rights. I believe that if the democratic world defeats totalitarianism, there will be no ethnic conglomerates, no states based on the national principle. Only cultures will remain national. A polarization of totalitarianism and democracy, not of totalitarianism and nationalism, is indeed occurring in our time. The so-called renaissance of nationalism is a return to the original frame of reference from whence the triumphal procession of totalitarianism began.

The ideological conflict between adherents of pluralism and democracy on one hand, and Solzhenitsyn with his nationalism on the other, is much more serious than the conflict between nationalism and communism. In the latter case it is a question only of a change in ideology; in the former case it concerns the destruction of the authoritarian-totalitarian structure itself so that all ideologies may exist alongside each other, including Marxist. Incidentally, it would be very interesting to see how Russian nationalists would fare with Ukrainian nationalists, for example, not in the abstract sense of recognizing the right of each nationality to a separate state, but in a quite concrete sense—the division of territory. There are almost as many such problems in the world as there are peoples, even without the constant threat of communist totalitarianism.

In the forthcoming issue of *Chronicles of Culture:*

The Old Federalism

"For the Founding Fathers, the bedrock of republicanism was not the mass political participation of the abstract individuals so dear to modern democratic theory. Rather, republicanism was defined by the freedom and self-determination of communities of men, pre-existing historically in all the complexity and differentiation of their social bonds."

—from "The Republican Community of Virtue"
by Clyde Wilson

ALSO

Fred Chappell on the New South realism of Jill McCorkle
Bryce Christensen on Mormons in the modern world
Otto Scott on disaffected traditionalists

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The remaking of the planet so that every people would have its own separate territory and state is completely inconceivable. Fortunately this is by no means needed for national cultures and traditions to flourish. Only one thing is needed: pluralistic democracy.

Eleven years ago, after Solzhenitsyn's famous "Letter to the Soviet Leaders," I wrote that this "letter," given different circumstances, could cause spiritual harm exceeding the benefit of the *Gulag Archipelago*. I was imprisoned a month later, in October of the same year. At a press conference in Stockholm on December 12, 1974, Solzhenitsyn declared, regarding my criticism, that he did not think it possible to answer a person who is in prison. Nevertheless, many other critics of his political statements (such as Valeriy Chalidze, Andrei Sakharov, and Boris Shragin) were not in prison at that time or a few years hence; Solzhenitsyn, however, did not advance even one counterargument. His fear of serious polemics has the same roots as the Soviet ideologists'—the absence of arguments!

One can only resist communism by proceeding from a postcommunist position, not a precommunist one, as Solzhenitsyn is attempting to do. No one yet knows whether mankind will be able to save its spiritual freedom; the last and decisive conflict has not yet begun. In addition, it must not be forgotten that totalitarianism can still change its external forms and even discard atheism. There is one thing that a totalitarian system can never accept and that is freedom of the individual. It is by no means obligatory that the present version of Marxist-Leninist communism triumph on a worldwide scale. A still more pernicious version is possible: a totalitarianism that is not atheistic.

In the famous legend of the "Grand Inquisitor" in *The Brothers Karamazov*, Dostoevsky puts into the mouth of the Inquisitor a vision of the future to come about after our present era of humanism, science, atheism, etc. Dostoevsky, through the Grand Inquisitor, in no way predicts that after an era of flourishing atheistic and secular culture, and all the atrocities of enslavement and totalitarianism, there will be a return to Christ and Christ's freedom. On the contrary, he predicts even worse subjugation "in the name of Christ," subjugation that the inquisitors will carry out. This is what the Inquisitor tells Christ:

> Oh, ages are yet to come of the confusion of free thought, of their science and cannibalism. For having begun to build their tower of Babel without us, they will end, of course, with cannibalism. . . . Dost thou know that the ages will pass, and humanity will proclaim by the lips of their sages that there is no crime, and therefore no sin; there is only hunger. 'Feed men, and then ask them of virtue!' that's what they'll write on the banner, which they will raise against Thee, and with which they will destroy Thy temple. Where Thy temple stood will rise a new building; the terrible tower of Babel will be built again, and though, like the one of old, it will not be finished, yet Thou mightest have prevented that new tower and have cut short the sufferings of men for a thousand years; for they will come back to us after a thousand years of agony with their tower. They will seek us again, hidden underground in the catacombs, *for we shall be again persecuted and tortured*. They will find us and cry to us, 'Feed us, for those who have promised us fire from heaven haven't given it!' And then we shall finish building their tower, for he finishes the building who feeds them. And we alone shall feed them in Thy name. . . . Oh, we shall persuade them that they will only become free when they renounce their freedom to us and submit to us. And shall we be right or shall we be lying? They will be convinced that we are right, for they will remember the horrors of slavery and confusion to which Thy freedom brought them. Freedom, free thought and science, will lead them into such straits and will bring them face to face with such marvels and insoluble mysteries, that some of them, the fierce and rebellious, will destroy themselves, others, rebellious but weak, will destroy one another, while the rest, weak and unhappy, will crawl fawning to our feet and whine to us: 'Yes, you were right, you alone possess His mystery, and we come back to you, save us from ourselves!'

Unfortunately, very much in Solzhenitsyn's political preaching is reminiscent of the Grand Inquisitor's words. There is the "self-limitation" of freedom and the proposal to change only the ideology, but not the structure of authoritarian power, and much else. We should remember that in our time not only those who cherish freedom, but the inquisitors as well are persecuted and in catacombs. All the same, perhaps the prophecy of Dostoevsky's Grand Inquisitor will not become reality, despite the fact that, as Solzhenitsyn's political articles show, this is a very real danger. Solzhenitsyn writes: "The path that I do propose is set forth in the conclusion of my Harvard speech and I can repeat it here; there is no other way left but upward. I believe that the lavishly materialistic twentieth century has all too long kept us in a subhuman state—some of us through superabundance, others through hunger." It is quite true that economic well-being cannot be life's goal, neither for an individual nor for mankind in general. Life loses its value when it becomes an end in itself. There exist values higher than material well-being, values higher than life itself. Everywhere democratic societies sprang up, their founders were people who placed freedom of the human spirit, the freedom of each individual, higher than physical existence alone. However, these freedoms have nothing in common with a way of life based on the national principle, since history has shown us quite a few examples of the renaissance and flowering of nationalism coexisting without freedom. The results of suppressing freedom either in a national state or a multinational society are always tragic. The renaissance of the idea of freedom as a value higher than life, and the vision that ensues from this, of a universal, pluralistic, and democratic mankind—these are the only things that can stand against the (also) universal communist utopia. Although Solzhenitsyn's words offer humankind "the path upward," in reality he is beckoning us on a path which leads abruptly down. ∞

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REVOLUTION ON THE RIGHT: THE END OF BOURGEOIS CONSERVATISM? *by Samuel T. Francis*

In the early months of 1985, national headlines recounted lurid tales of an impending right-wing bloodbath in the United States. In New York City Bernhard Goetz admitted to the shooting of four Blacks who he believed were about to assault him on a subway car, and he promptly became a national hero. In the Washington area and in Florida, police arrested several individuals for bombing a number of abortion clinics, and in March someone fired a shot through the living-room window of the *bête noire* of abortion foes, Supreme Court Justice Harry Blackmun. At about the same time, the FBI and other law enforcement agencies were tracking down and sometimes shooting it out with a violent, anti-Jewish, neo-Nazi secret society called the "Silent Brotherhood," which was accused of committing murders and armed robberies in the Far West and was said to have constructed a nationwide underground network of like-minded citizens.

The sages of the Northeastern establishment waxed gleeful at these reports. After listening to Ronald Reagan talk for four years about Soviet-supported terrorism, they now divined that the real terrorist threat came from the extreme right, which the President and his allies like the Reverend Falwell were said to have insufficiently repudiated. After years of dribbling down their chins over Huey Newton and Ché Guevara, liberal pundits now began to whine about the wickedness of "taking the law into your own hands." After a full year of inventing excuses for not denouncing Jesse Jackson and Louis Farrakhan, they now stepped forward boldly to spit in the ugly face of extremism. Once again, American liberalism had proved itself to have the intellectual rigor and moral integrity of a street-corner card shark.

And yet the liberals may have some reason for their mewling. For all of their feeble efforts to implicate Reagan and Falwell in the outbreak of right-wing violence, the establishment left perhaps sensed that the new militants were in reality distinctively different from what has become the establishment right and that they may represent a new force in American politics, something almost unique in American history. The left believes, through its own bloody history, what conservatives find extraordinarily difficult to accept: that a cause becomes forceful when its adherents are willing to shed blood for it, and that the shedding of blood, by itself, galvanizes a cause, solidifies its followers, and induces its enemies to look about them. It is one thing to give money to a favorite candidate or a tax-exempt foundation; it is another to kill someone who disagrees with you. The former is a hobby; the latter, a revolution.

Of course there has been violence from the right before in American history—most recently in the Klan bombings and shootings of the 1960's and to a lesser extent in the antibusing activism of the early 1970's. Those extremists, however, were quickly absorbed into less desperate movements led by George Wallace, Richard Nixon, Spiro Agnew, and Ronald Reagan, just as left-wing extremists were absorbed by the New Deal of the 1930's and the McGovern campaign of 1972. What appears to be different about the pro-life bombers, the neo-Nazi conspirators, and the anonymous fans of Citizen Goetz, however, is that they are popping up precisely at the moment when the most conservative President of this century has just won a second landslide electoral victory and when a version of political conservatism seems to be gaining some momentum in the national mind. Proclivities to right-wing violence should have been mollified by the current trend, but they weren't. And it is this thought that really frightens the brahmins of the liberal establishment: there just might really be something loose in the dark corners of America that doesn't care about the symbolic flag-waving, is not bought off by the direct mail of Washington-based populists, and wears a lean and hungry look that cannot be placated by the normal give-and-take of consensual politics. And if that something is there, then the American left—and indeed many American conservatives—do have something to worry about.

American conservatism, especially in its political manifestation, has centered on the defense of a commercial society and the ideas, values, and institutions associated with it. Certainly there is more to philosophical conservatism than this, but the ideas of Edmund Burke, Russell Kirk, Leo Strauss, the New Humanists, and the Southern Agrarians have never played much part in our practical politics. The commercialist and bourgeois elements in conservatism have attracted many businessmen and that dwindling portion of the citizenry that still admires and respects business. The principal value that most American conservatives have always defended is the private gratification of individual interests. Hence, the strong libertarian and pro-business thrust of American conservative ideology from the Gilded Age to the present, rather than (as in Europe or Latin America) an ideology based on religious or ultranationalist themes. Yet it is precisely on such themes that the new militants of the right are dwelling, and it may be that they or similar groups are in the process of articulating something that has never existed in America: a national myth, rising above and overshadowing private interests, to which a revolutionary right can adhere and for which its adherents would gladly spill their own blood and that of others.

It should be obvious that the new militants are not particularly exercised by the pocketbook issues. The "Army of God" and similar groups that allegedly kidnap abortionists, blow up their clinics, and perhaps take occasional potshots at Supreme Court Justices speak for themselves. What they want is a government which is publicly and seriously committed to a moral and religious principle—the sanctity of unborn life—and which actually thwarts

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the gratification of certain human appetites (the desire to have unlimited sexual fun without any of the responsibilities nature has imposed). Bernhard Goetz, whatever his lawyers may tell us, was probably less motivated by fear for his wallet or dread of the pain of being beaten up again than by a desire to reassert his own dignity by standing up for himself. Certainly the anecdotes told about his efforts to rescue other victims of crime on earlier occasions reinforce the belief that he was not acting purely out of self-interest, and that is undoubtedly one reason why so many Americans express admiration for him. Nor is the Silent Brotherhood concerned about balancing the budget, human rights in Afghanistan, or the other abstractions that seem to titillate mainstream conservatives these days. In the home of one of the alleged members of this group, the FBI discovered a manifesto entitled a "Declaration of War":

> By the millions, those not of our blood violate our borders and mock our claim to sovereignty. . . . Our heroes and our culture have been insulted and degraded. The mongrel hordes clamor to sever us from our inheritance. . . . All about us the land is dying. Our cities swarm with dusky hordes. The water is rancid and the air is rank. Our farms are being seized by usurious leeches and our people are being forced off the land. . . . They close the factories, the mills, the mines, and ship our jobs overseas. Yet the people do not awaken.

Although there is some economics (and no small amount of bigotry) in this declaration, its central message—"we have become a people dispossessed"—has nothing to do with OSHA regulations and bloated bureaucracies. It is hard to unravel fully the tangled passions that go into such a manifesto. But it may be assumed that here—in frenzied caricature—are some of the frustrations felt by middle Americans when their cherished symbols are threatened. San Antonio, for instance, used to be known as the "Alamo City," after the famous monastery nearby where American volunteers faced death from the bayonets of Mexican invaders. Present day Mexican invaders, armed with ballots, found the appellation degrading, and so the Texas metropolis is now known as the "River City." Similarly, in 1979 Atlanta, under the pressure of local Black politicians, changed the name of its "Forrest Avenue," named after one of America's greatest warriors, Confederate General Nathan Bedford Forrest, to "Ralph McGill Boulevard," after one of America's most swinish verbalists.

And every time a local government sets up a manger scene at Christmas or makes some other small public affirmation of the Christian identity and heritage of America, it is besieged by the ACLU to take it down. It is now almost impossible to have prayers on public occasions unless there are at least three clergymen of different faiths to make clear that we are not really a Christian nation but merely a conglomerate engaged in public relations.

All of these phenomena are instances of what the manifesto of the Silent Brotherhood prefers to call "dispossession," the chipping and stripping away at the traditional identity of America by militant minorities and special interests aided by spineless and hypocritical elements of the majority. What the homicidal crackpots of the Silent Brotherhood have perceived, and what is utterly lost on some pundits, fund-raisers, and politicians who claim to speak for the mainstream right, is that, denuded of its historic, national, and religious identity, a people dies and becomes a population, a demographic and economic statistic whose character and identity are then defined in terms of exit polls and consumption patterns; that unless the real identity of a nation is conserved, the issues of budgets, bombs, and bureaucrats are irrelevant to its survival.

What may be evolving in the subway cars of New York and the basement laboratories of bomb-happy pro-lifers is a nativist and largely underground right-wing movement motivated by something other than getting and spending. To be sure, what became known as the "New Right" in the late 1970's was also moved by nonmaterial goals, but by the end of 1984 it was surely clear that parts of the Republican establishment, Northeastern academic neoconservatives, and Mr. Reagan's Kitchen Cabinet had co-opted the New Right and channeled its energies into support for the establishment framework of politics and policymaking. The conventional explanation was that economic issues took precedence over social issues. By opting for political violence, the new militants have ensured that they will never enter that framework. They or their successors may engage in politics, but it is likely to be a politics far more bitter, confrontational, and even violent than anything yet contemplated by any of us on the mainstream right, old or new.

Nor is the establishment capable of absorbing the militancy of the far right. The political framework of the establishment is essentially bourgeois in its design and functioning; it is able to assimilate and gratify private aspirations for material gain, whether of the left or the right, as long as left and right are based on constituencies with such aspirations. The bourgeois framework cannot absorb or respond to political forces that lack economic ambitions, are willing to kill people merely in defense of a national or religious or cultural identity, and reject and contradict the very nature of the bourgeois order. Irving Kristol has written that bourgeois society "roots itself in the most worldly and common of human motivations: self-interest," that it is "the most prosaic of all possible societies" and has little use for the heroic, the transcendent, and the romantic-utopian; and Kristol is correct that mainstream conservative politics in America is characteristically bourgeois.

The new militants, unlike the mainstream right, reject the old bourgeois order and, unlike the militants of the left, equally reject what is superseding the bourgeois system, the managerial regime of salaried technocrats and bureaucrats who promote a humanist and cosmopolitan myth. Although the militants of the right are themselves from the lower or middle income strata, they lack the economic and social autonomy that characterizes bourgeois businessmen and farmers, and one source of their frustration is that they are economically and socially dependent on the anonymous and impervious managerial system. Conservative rebels against the managerial establishment have generally sought a base in the bourgeois remnants of American society and have often succeeded in modifying or slowing down the liberal-managerial agenda. It has been possible to do so by appealing to bourgeois self-interest and common sense, but

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it is not possible through such an appeal to challenge the establishment and its agenda frontally. It is not possible because there is no conservative myth in modern political culture that rises above private aspirations or mobilizes masses on a right-wing but nonbourgeois level. But the new militants are closer to the vision of Solzhenitsyn than Milton Friedman. Bourgeois self-interest is less important to them than the heroic, the transcendent, and the romantic. They do not seek to modify or to parley with the establishment, but to destroy it.

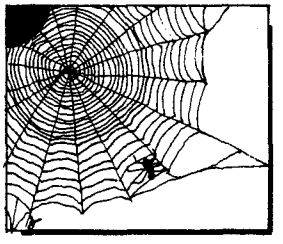
It is because they are postbourgeois and antibourgeois, because they have so little attraction to the prosaic ambitions of bourgeois civilization and so much scorn for the baubles of the managerial regime, that the new militants or their successors may be able to achieve what no other force on the American right has ever been able to do, to formulate a myth of the right around which it would be possible to mobilize a massive popular challenge to the myth of the left that has animated Western politics for the last two centuries and which has now even insinuated itself into contemporary conservatism. "Myths," wrote Georges Sorel, "are not descriptions of things, but expressions of a determination to act. . . . A myth cannot be refuted, since it is, at bottom, identical with the convictions of a group, being the expression of their convictions in the language of movement; and it is, in consequence, unanalysable into parts which could be placed on the plane of historical descriptions." The frightening significance of the perpetrators of recent right-wing violence does not therefore consist in their "descriptions of things," but in their "determination to act," in the irrefutable power of their convictions, and in the possibility that they may be able to conjure up that most formidable of all specters in the nightmares of establishments, a revolution from the right, a rejection of both bourgeois comforts as well as of managerial humanism and social engineering, and an affirmation of our national identity and its destiny. And if indeed this is the rough beast that moves among the fragments of our heritage, then we are well advised to sleep uneasily. cc

REVISIONS

The Enemy Within

The war in Vietnam has been over for a decade, but the war over *Vietnam* still rages. That the word now signifies an American failure is obvious. But analysts, politicians, and commentators disagree sharply over the nature of the failure and over who bears responsibility. Many of those who opposed the war said that America had to fail in Vietnam because military intervention abroad is always immoral and ineffective, especially when it supports a corrupt and authoritarian regime. This indeed is what is usually meant by the cries of "No more Vietnams!" that greet every suggestion that America use its armed might to prevent Communist subversion in other countries. But Richard Nixon has entitled his latest book *No More Vietnams* (Arbor House; New York; $14.95) with something entirely different in mind. The former President compellingly argues not only that our objective in Vietnam was moral but that the military effort could and should have succeeded.

In making his case, Nixon joins the growing army of writers —Guenter Lewy, Peter Braestrup, Timothy Lomperis, Norman Podhoretz, and others—who are challenging received wisdom concerning the Vietnam War. They have amassed an impressive body of evidence showing that our troops *won* the war both on the battlefields and in the hearts of the South Vietnamese people. Their sacrifices came to nothing because America entered the war with no clear plan for defeating the North Vietnamese, be-



cause American intellectuals and newsmen misinformed the public about our enemies, our allies, and our victories, and finally because Congress refused to provide sufficient aid to the South Vietnamese after we withdrew. The failure, then, was not in the jungles and villages of Southeast Asia, but in this country's strategy rooms, editorial offices, and lecture halls.

Those who succeeded in stopping American "aggression" in Vietnam now rarely mention the country, unless their eyes are firmly fixed upon Central America or Africa. To confront present-day Indochina is to see a land that our former foes have turned into a mass grave and a tropical gulag; it is to contemplate the hundreds of thousands of ordinary people who drowned trying to escape from the new workers' paradise. It is to realize that "a Communist peace kills more than an anti-Communist war."

"No more Vietnams!" must not, then, mean paralysis in the face of Communist imperialism. It must mean instead, Nixon argues, that we learn how to fight "the Third World war" successfully. We must find ways to use our power —military, economic, and political—more effectively in stopping the spread of tyranny. That we have the material resources and technology to win, Nixon does not doubt. The "nagging question" for him is whether we now have the national will necessary to fight for freedom beyond our borders. This is an especially troubling issue given the willingness of journalists and academics to perpetuate the "Vietnam syndrome," always believing "the worst about the United States and the best about our enemies." Resolving this problem is a far more urgent task than updating our arsenal, expanding our foreign aid, or educating our diplomats. cc

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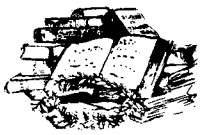

COMMENDABLES

Thinking Clearly About War

by Gary Jason

James Turner Johnson: *Can Modern War Be Just?*; Yale University Press; New Haven.

There is nothing quite so fatuous as the nuclear pacifism currently fashionable among leftist theologians and their ilk. Visions of mushroom clouds (brought on by repeated viewings of *On the Beach* and *Dr. Strangelove)* cloud many minds. The result is the fuzzy-minded view that we must either accept the current MAD standoff with the Soviets, or else we must unilaterally disarm. Nuclear pacifism thus paralyzes the West, allowing the Soviets to replace pro-Western governments with proxy regimes.

Such fuzzy-mindedness and paralysis might be avoided if we relied more upon the "just war" theory, developed by philosophers and theologians since Augustine. Sketchily put, just war theory distinguishes questions about *jus ad bellum* (i.e., questions about what justifies resort to war) from questions about *jus in bello* (i.e., questions about which forms of force in war are justifiable). The consensus view has been that a war is justified if and only if there is a just cause (reason) for it, it is ordered by the right (proper) authority, with the right intent, as a last resort, with the end goal of peace, and the evil it produces is proportionate to the good. And a form of violence or weaponry is acceptable in a war if and only if it discriminates between combatants and noncombatants, and it is proportionate (i.e., not excessive) in the destruction it causes.

James T. Johnson has applied just war theory to questions about modern war. He is certainly well-versed in that tradition, having written earlier two books on the history of just war doctrines: *Ideology, Reason and the Limitation of War,* and *Just War Tradition and the Restraint of War.* These books were intended for an academic audience. In *Can Modern War Be Just?* Johnson attempts to address the lay audience.

Essentially, Johnson's book consists of a number of previously written essays more or less modified to constitute chapters. In each essay/chapter he applies just war theory to some feature of modern war—either particular wars (such as Israel's incursion into Lebanon) or specific weapons (such as the neutron bomb) or specific issues (such as conscientious objection). The results of his inquiries do not fall neatly into the current liberal/conservative dichotomy.

Some of his arguments are nicely drawn, and persuasive. He neatly punc-

tures the ban-the-bomb balloon, rightly pointing out that unilateral disarmament is the real desire of people who want to ban the bomb, and that unilateral disarmament will increase—not decrease—the chances of nuclear war. He urges a move toward counterforce rather than counterpopulation strategy (i.e., developing weapons directed at the enemy's military power, rather than at his population centers). This latter point of view has not been popular with the professional "peace" activists, causing Johnson some puzzlement. He observes that "there is no small irony in the fact that some of the opponents of counterpopulation strategy on moral grounds have been vocally opposed to efforts to transform our national defense posture away from this strategy, alleging the creation of instability." He is surely right in thinking that there is a curious inconsistency in opposing nuclear holocaust yet opposing any move toward a less deadly strategy—such as President Reagan's plans to put a defensive net in space. Johnson also argues well for the acceptability of the neutron bomb and cruise missile.

However, on a number of issues his arguments are much less persuasive. Occasionally, such as in his discussion of Israel's incursion into Lebanon, his arguments fail to convince because they are hopelessly brief and superficial—a consequence of addressing far too many issues in a 190-page book, a book which has, moreover, a great amount of redundancy. In other cases, Johnson doesn't fully come to grips with the issues. For example, he seems to urge that we pursue a "decapitation" strategy—develop weapons with the goal of wiping out the Soviets' command and control structure. But he himself notes that this will violate the doctrine of avoiding noncombatants (the Soviet leaders, after all, reside in Moscow).

Though his effort is not satisfactory in every respect, Johnson does seriously attempt to balance principles and respect facts. For this he is to be praised. cc

Gary Jason is professor of philosophy at Washburn University of Topeka.

Clear-Eyed Southerner

by John Shelton Reed

Edwin M. Yoder Jr.: *The Night of the Old South Ball: And Other Essays and Fables*; Yoknapatawpha Press; Oxford, MS; $13.95.

These essays and columns by a distinguished journalist cover a wide range of topics, among them Sherlock Holmes, *I'll Take My Stand,* the King James Bible, and Flannery O'Connor. A good many have to do with the South, one way or another, and Yoder confesses that he likes the South, with all its faults, better than the Sunbelt, with whatever its virtue may be. He suspects, deep down, that the South is gone, or going—and certainly the settled, small-town South that he (and I) grew up with is apparently doomed. In an essay on W. J. Cash, though, Yoder has some sharp things to say about the role of intellectuals (most certainly including journalists like Cash—and himself) in keeping ideas (like that of the South) alive and breathing.

For the most part, Yoder's tastes are utterly sound, and the few I don't share (Henry James, for instance) I'm com-

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pelled to respect. He is a fair but generous critic. (I've been the beneficiary, notably in a foreword to one of my books, reprinted here.) And he is a gentle man—like John Stuart Mill, whom he celebrates in one of these essays, always ready to try to see the point of those with whom he disagrees. (If this were all there were to liberalism, how much more attractive that ideology would be.) This style, evident throughout this collection, makes it all the more effective when Yoder rounds on something or someone: it must have been egregiously awful to have provoked him. His dislikes are as well-chosen and well-expressed as his enthusiasms: I'm surprised that Tom Wicker isn't ashamed to show his face in public.

That these essays are not in chronological order is unfortunate on two counts. In the first place, it is disconcerting to read, for instance, why Yoder finds the outgoing Carter Administration disappointing and then to read of his high hopes for the incoming Carter Administration. More importantly, one reason for a collection like this is to allow a reader to get acquainted with the writer's mind, and no one —certainly not Yoder—has the same "mind" for 20 years. Or, more precisely, the same mind in different contexts can look quite different.

The early pieces here display a mid-60's Southern liberalism, probably pretty much the outlook that guided Yoder when he wrote for the *Daily Tar Heel* at the University of North Carolina, an outlook well-represented at that institution since the days of Howard Odum and Frank Porter Graham: at worst, naive; at best, large-souled, optimistic, and, withal, very Southern. But America has changed since then, and so have Yoder's circumstances. He's no longer the boy-journalist crusading against bigotry and ignorance. Now he lives just across the Potomac from the Great Wen, and consorts up close on occasion with the mighty. Lately, Yoder seems to be becoming something of an American version of a Tory "wet": skeptical about ideologues, whether of the right or left, but undeniably some sort of conservative. He hasn't changed all that much, though: many Southern liberals of the 50's and 60's look equally conservative by latter-day standards. It's almost a question of taste. cc

John Shelton Reed, a one-time Southern liberal, teaches sociology at the University of North Carolina and is writing a book on Victorian Anglo-Catholicism.

From the Wilderness to the White House

William Rusher: *The Rise of the Right*; William Morrow; New York.

As a political movement, conservatism died in 1964 with Barry Goldwater's landslide defeat. All the commentators said so. But some people, including Bill Rusher, publisher of the *National Review*, were not listening. For those who had worked for two decades to forge conservatism into a new political force in America, Goldwater's campaign was only a dress rehearsal. So what if the leading man was upstaged by a crafty Texan or if the mob scene (i.e., the election) was poorly choreographed? The point was that the script was finally written, a stage (the Republican Party) was secured, willing sponsors were subscribed, a talented supporting cast (including a promising actor from California) had been found, and skilled directors and stage managers were enlisted. The show would go on. Rusher's *The Rise of the Right* is the engaging account of how the script of political conservatism first got written (largely in the pages of his own magazine) and of how it finally brought down the house in 1980. It is a fascinating story, written with clarity and full of the kind of insider information that could make a fortune on Wall Street.

If Rusher's "observations . . . from a seat in the first row" have a fault, it derives from the author's gentlemanly decency, which may have led him to downplay the backstage ironies and the tensions between some of conservatism's principal figures. Rusher perceives that the "three components of modern conservatism"—classical liberalism, traditionalism, and anticommunism—derive from "very different sources." But his assertion that the differences are "more complementary than contradictory" verges on wishful thinking, especially since Rusher himself concedes that leading libertarians and traditionalists anathematize each other. If "conservatism" is no more than antiliberalism, then its unity requires a strong, even dominant, opponent—and that, in the Reagan years, can no longer be assumed. It has been the fate of revolutionary movements that as soon as they succeed, their united front breaks up into squabbling factions. In these internecine struggles, it is all too often the most ruthless and intolerant elements that take power (one thinks of Robespierre and Lenin) before handing it over to simpler and less principled successors.

Now, conservatives have not actually taken power, but they have, at least, taken a large piece of it. It will be partly due to the efforts of men like Rusher if the "movement" does not become a battleground for feuding leaders and ideological remnants. cc

Satire In and Out of Season

Franky Schaeffer and Harold Fickett: *A Modest Proposal: For Peace, Prosperity and Happiness*; Thomas Nelson; Nashville, TN.

Writing in 1738, Alexander Pope lamented, "Satire is no more—I feel it die." What was the cause of the genre's demise? Pope explained:

> Vice with such Giant-strides
> comes on amain,
> Invention strives to be
> before in vain;
> Feign what I will, and paint it
> e'er so strong,
> Some rising Genius sins up
> to my Song.

And if Pope's wit found it difficult to keep up with the sinful Geniuses of his day, the talents of Franky Schaeffer and Harold Fickett are simply no match for today's accomplished engineers of evil. Even so, they have made a genuine contribution to social enlightenment. Aiming at a modern version of Swift's

masterpiece on the Irish question, the authors adopt the persona of a leading government bureaucrat in the 1990's planning the imposition of a quality-of-life utopia. The eating of (aborted) babies is only part of the agenda which includes infanticide, euthanasia, bioengineering, and antireligious thought-control. Swift would have applauded the choice of targets. But whereas the Dean's *Modest Proposal* required an heroic exertion of imagination, Schaeffer and Fickett have only had to extrapolate from obvious trends.

Physicians *are* publicly advocating euthanasia and infanticide, graduate students *are* experimenting with live human fetuses, homosexuals *are* assert-

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ing their right to promote sadomasochism in public schools. Against a social backdrop of common sanity, Swift's singular vision of the grotesque was both striking and original. Now that the backdrop has fallen down, writers who conjure images of degeneracy are in competition with the evening news. (BC) cc

IN FOCUS

The Light From the East

by Lee Congdon

Martin Jay: *Marxism and Totality: The Adventures of a Concept From Lukács to Habermas*; University of California Press; Berkeley, CA.

Like the exponents of Critical Theory, the subjects of his first book, Martin Jay considers himself to be an "extraterritorial" outsider. Professor of history at the University of California at Berkeley, he insists that he and others on the left have been consigned to the academic ghetto. Radical in his sympathies, he continues to maintain his distance from organized political groups. The tradition of "Western Marxism," which he made his own during the 1960's, has remained alive for him "not through its concrete embodiments in movements, mass or otherwise, for radical social change, but rather through a dispersed cultural community of radical . . . intellectuals."

Because he is frankly disillusioned by socialism's record in power as well as by "bourgeois" society's annoying resiliency, he prefers to reside in the dense verbal world constructed by the contributors to such journals as *Telos*, *New Left Review*, *Theory and Society*, and *New German Critique*. It is not surprising, then, that he admires Jürgen Habermas's labyrinthine attempt to wed Marxism to linguistic philosophy. The leading member of the second generation of Critical Theorists, Habermas maintains that "communicative"—as opposed to instrumental—rationality might yet point the way to human "emancipation," the meaning of which he, like Jay, holds to be self-evident.

This reluctance to delineate the realm of freedom is particularly perplexing in Jay's case because he wants us to believe that Western Marxism, in contrast to Soviet and East European versions, embodies socialism's "libertarian, emancipatory hopes." In order to chart the ups and downs of those hopes, he has focused his attention on the pivotal category of totality. It is an interesting strategy and one that enables him to make some sense of the often bitter disputes within the Western Marxist camp between critical (usually Hegelian) and scientific theorists. Yet by beginning with Georg Lukács and *History and Class Consciousness*—the "seminal text of Western Marxism"—he unwittingly betrays the ambiguity that lies at the very origin of the tradition.

A response to the Bolshevik Revolution and the short-lived Hungarian Soviet Republic of 1919, Lukács's remarkable essay collection was anything but Western. It was, in fact, a sophisticated defense of Leninism. Furthermore, the remaining founders of the tradition—Karl Korsch, Antonio Gramsci, and Ernst Bloch—were all, as Jay demonstrates, "avid Leninists in the early 1920's." They had almost nothing in common with those whom Raymond Aron rightly identified as authentic Western Marxists—the theorists of the Second International.

Be that as it may, Jay turns next to the members of the Frankfurt School. Although one of them, Herbert Marcuse, retained his utopian enthusiasm to the end, Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno renounced Lukács's concept of totality and eventually transformed Marxism into a vision of despair. For them, Auschwitz, not the Russian Revolution, was the paradigmatic 20th-century event. Because Jay would prefer to overcome their bleak resignation, he follows the argument about totality to France, explicating in turn the initially more affirmative Hegelian Marxism of Alexandre Kojève, Jean Hyppolite, Henri Lefebvre, and Lucien Goldmann; the existentialist Marxism of Jean-Paul Sartre and Maurice Merleau-Ponty; and the structuralist Marxism of Louis Althusser. Before arriving at Habermas, he pauses to take account of scientific Marxism in postwar Italy, citing the work of Galvano Della Volpe and Lucio Colletti. He concludes his study with some provisional reflections on the post-structuralist challenge issued to Western Marxism by such overrated intellectual celebrities as Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida.

On reading Jay's long history, one cannot help but be struck by the fact that, with the exception of Lukács and Merleau-Ponty, the so-called Western Marxists were confused and mediocre thinkers. Moreover, none but Lukács and Bloch—the latter briefly—took up residence in self-styled Marxist states, preferring instead to rail against "capitalist" society from within its comfortable confines. Indeed, what stands out in their work above all else is their hatred of the West and their consequent receptivity to light from the East. It is ironic therefore that it is from the East that new light has begun to play upon the theoretical landscape. Many of the best of those who have experienced official Marxism have now become the bearers of the bad news that Western Marxism "is itself deeply flawed as an antidote to the horrors of its Eastern counterpart." That, certainly, is the message of the brilliant Polish-born philosopher Leszek Kolakowski, whose masterful *Main Currents of Marxism* far surpasses Jay's study. More recently it is also, as Jay observes, the warning of Lukács's own students, the Hungarian émigrés Mihály Vajda, György Márkus, Ágnes Heller, and Ferenc Fehér. cc

Lee Congdon is author of The Young Lukács *(University of North Carolina Press).*

Moll and Mouse

by Stephen Tanner

Francoise Sagan: *Salad Days*; Translated by C. J. Richards; E. P. Dutton; New York.

This short novel is obviously designed as an expression of what the jacket identifies as one of the author's favorite themes: "star-crossed passion." A young accountant for a factory in a dreary environment of soot and sameness discovers at the base of a slag heap a leather pouch filled with an assortment of valuable jewels. The landlady of his boardinghouse, a proud and intelligent woman in her fifties who, like everyone else, has viewed the timid, insignificant bookkeeper with indifference, if not contempt, discovers the treasure in his room and learns from the newspaper that a man known to possess such jewels had been stabbed 17 times and dumped in a river. She wants a share, and having once been the mistress of a Marseilles gangster, has a friend who can fence the jewels. Selling them, however, is incidental to the novel's principal concern: the relationship that develops between these two people.

Mistakenly believing he is a murderer, she views him with new interest and approval. She respects self-assertive strength and is untroubled by moral

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qualms. Her change of attitude produces in him such a pleasant new sense of self-esteem that he allows her to believe he is a murderer. He needs to be respected; she needs a man she can respect. His view of what produces respect is shaped pitifully by movie tough guys. Her view of what warrants respect in a man is morally perverse. Their relationship, that of mother-son as well as lovers, fluctuates as she periodically doubts his strength and he consequently reverts to timid insecurity.

The question of how our lives can be changed radically by others' opinions of us, even when the opinions are based on lies, is intriguing. But this exploration gets little beyond stereotypes. The milk-toast protagonist is, after all, a bookkeeper. His supervisor, true to type, is a cowardly bully. The landlady who admires only men strong enough to kill for what they want was formerly a gangster's moll. The bookkeeper's repeated transitions from meekness to machismo are as abrupt as what happens when Popeye downs a can of spinach or Clark Kent enters a phone booth. The final impression is one of cartoon-level cleverness rather than of penetrating revelation of plausible characters. cc

Stephen Tanner is professor of English at Brigham Young University.

WASTE OF MONEY

Not a Prayer

by Steven Hayward

Horst E. Richter: ***All Mighty: A Study of the God Complex in Western Man***; Harvest House Publishers; Claremont, CA.

There are several ways of thinking about what has come to be called "the decline of the West." There are the rather sweeping generalizations about secularism by evangelical theologian Francis Schaeffer. There are the more formidable authors who identify the decisive break in Western thought with one figure: Leo Strauss points the finger at Machiavelli; Richard Weaver singles out the nominalism of William of Occam; and Eric Voegelin beats up on Joachim of Flora. Then there are the gloomy historicists—redactors of Hegel, really—like Spengler and even Whittaker Chambers, who see large impersonal forces conspiring to foreclose the greatness and glory of Western civilization.

Each understanding of the "decline of the West" has its merits and demerits, but they all agree on one general point: the heart of modernity is the fatal hubris of thinking we can be our own God, that scientific progress will inevitably yield the perfection of man's estate. At first glance, Horst Richter's *All Mighty* (*Gotteskomplex* is the original German title) seems to affirm this understanding, stating at the outset that "the theme of this book is the disastrous belief of civilization that it is all-powerful, omnipotent." But before one gets very far one realizes that the book is a deception.

All Mighty is very simply an inflated apology for mass psychotherapy. The cause of our "fatal hubris" is not seen as a philosophical or moral problem; it is a psychological problem, a neurosis, due to the arrested adolescence of civilization. Richter likens the development of the Western world view to childhood development, asserting that our troubles are mostly due to not being fully grown up. Therefore, what the West needs is a good therapist. As such, the book is really a manifesto for the West German Green Party, which embraces the gnostic idea of salvation through "consciousness raising." In the preface to the U.S. edition, Richter praises the nuclear freeze movement, the National Council of Churches, Physicians for Social Responsibility, and Helen Caldicott as avatars of the new consciousness. As the old 1960's radicals might have said, this book isn't part of the solution, it's part of the problem. cc

Steven Hayward is an editor of the Claremont Review.

Snake in the Garden

by Arthur E. Hippler

Andrew Bard Schmooker: ***The Parable of the Tribes: The Problem of Power in Social Education***; University of California Press; Berkeley.

In this attempt to integrate moral thought with social science, Andrew Schmooker strains at the problem of evil, which he defines as intergroup human violence resulting from differences in power. Although the pursuit of power is not part of our original human nature, once it did emerge, it was perpetuated, since aggression is rewarded through success, and peaceful behavior gets its practitioners killed. These evils are not evidence of a deficiency in man's nature, but of the circumstances he occupies; not derived from free will, but from inappropriate social orderings.

Substituting his own "parable" for Genesis, he once-upon-a-times that humans used to be very nice. One group, however, turned unpleasant and used power on others. This distorted social version of the Old Testament does not square well with anthropological concepts of the continuity of dominance hierarchies among primates and the power of territoriality, but Schmooker does not take advantage of this opportunity to support the idea of human uniqueness.

Instead, he denies the existence of God while Satanizing the abstraction "power." As a balance to this, he appears to deify the power of reason. Everything will be fine in some millenarian temporal paradise, once we have found the way to eliminate power relationships from human society.

Why does Schmooker believe that the emergence of intergroup violence is a "problem"? Why not handle the "problem" of intergroup violence, in the immortal words of Stan Jablonski, by discovering how to "do it to them before they do it to us"? The problem emerges precisely because Schmooker has immanentized good in man. Having denied original (or any other kind of) sin and having ignored free will, he must locate the problem of evil somewhere else, in a parable of social origins.

But an inevitable objection arises. If our evil is only "structural," while our goodness is somehow innate, why has this evil (intergroup violence) existed forever and everywhere under all forms of government and every social structure? Schmooker simply doesn't address this and does a Kierkegaardian 2½ gainer hoping we can somehow redeem ourselves by ourselves, though he has previously provided a staggering historical indictment against the human race.

Schmooker is all too representative of the secular scholars who, in their efforts to rise above mere man, end up abasing themselves before the total state. As Chesterton observed: "When men stop believing in God they do not then believe in nothing, they then believe in anything." cc

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SCREEN

Yawning in the Aisles

by Stephen Macaulay

***Stranger Than Paradise*; A film by Jim Jarmusch; Samuel Goldwyn.**

***Stop Making Sense*; A film by Jonathan Demme and Talking Heads; Cinecom/Island Alive.**

All the praise that has been heaped on these films might lead you to suppose that Jarmusch and Demme—and the assembled Talking Heads, under the direction and supervision of David Byrne—have created cinematic texts of the first order. But the best that *Stranger Than Paradise* and *Stop Making Sense* can say for themselves is that they are, to use a phrase that will identify the group to which I am referring, "talkin' about my ge-ge-gen-generation." If they are as good as it gets, then the Baby Boomers ought to stick to Trivial Pursuit.

Stranger Than Paradise is a cut above art movies—the type of thing the same people are now making with their VCR equipment. Here we have a collection of vignettes about two New York hipsters and a Hungarian immigrant, the cousin of one of the beboppers. As we watch the banality of life lived in a run-down, one-room apartment—sleeping, drinking beer, watching the Yankees play on the small black-and-white set—another title for the film begins to emerge: *Welcome to America?* The question mark is vital. The only thing that could be more yawn-inspiring would be a trip to Cleveland in the dead of winter—and sure enough, Jarmusch provides one. To be sure, *Stranger Than Paradise* is one of the most unpretentious films to make it beyond small college auditoriums and coffeehouse backrooms, but so what?

Stop Making Sense is a concert film. It shows the once avant-garde and now quasi-mainstream Talking Heads in action. Unlike *Gimme Shelter, Mad Dogs and Englishmen, Concert for Bangladesh,* or any of the others, *Stop Making Sense* concentrates on the performers instead of the woman in the front row shakin' it, or the paramedics carting out limp bodies. David Byrne, stumbling around like a spastic, is the thing. If *Stop Making Sense* is *cinema verité,* then it's no longer a sin to tell a lie. cc

Long Ride Home

by Herbert London

***Lost in America*; Produced by Marty Katz; Directed by Albert Brooks; Written by Albert Brooks and Monica Johnson.**

Whatever happened to the "dropped out, turned on" Captain America of *Easy Rider,* who for a brief time captured the hearts of Hollywood moguls and the minds of hip urbanites longing for a life free of convention and restraints? In the age of Reagan, this mythological figure reappears as a yuppie in Albert Brooks's *Lost in America.* This guileless tale of two urban professionals attempting to drop out of the proverbial rat race reveals another side of the *Easy Rider* experience.

Albert Brooks is an advertising executive with a major firm. He is responsible—a word perceived as a pejorative. He is imaginative, as his boss readily concedes. He is on a fast track, as his dreams of a Mercedes with dark brown exterior and tan interior suggest. But one day he finds himself derailed. Instead of getting the vice presidency he was almost sure of, he is asked to relocate to New York for a minor position. Incensed at the suggestion, he quits his job to relive the exploits in his *Easy Rider* fantasies.

But this is the 80's, and Brooks is a yuppie, not a yippie. He buys an elegant motor home to cross the country (Harley Davidsons don't have indoor plumbing). He cashes in his assets for a "nest egg"—no need to live off the land or depend on his friends. But life on the road isn't all it's cracked up to be. At his stop in Las Vegas, his wife discovers a compulsion for gambling. By the time he awakens, she has blown their nest egg at the roulette table. This dream of carefree travel among the indigenes is shattered like the hippie vision of an unrestrained social paradise.

It quickly dawns on our hero that he and his wife had better find jobs. But opportunities in a small Arizona town are not what they are in Los Angeles. The $100,000 a year executive is obliged to become a school crossing guard and his charming wife, who used to be a personnel director, is tickled pink to find employment at a fast-food stand. By now, husband and wife have begun to realize that their dream of discovering America is a fraud. Instead of driving out into the sunset, destination unknown, they speed as quickly as their motor home will permit to New York. The adventurer has had enough of adventure to know that if he must eat crow to regain his position, so be it. The grass isn't greener on the other side of bourgeois America; those who have been there know.

Brooks's comedy reveals more about contemporary life—I believe—than its writers may have intended. For one thing, the dream of wanderlust hasn't vanished; it has been remodeled to suit ambitious, acquisitive executives. For another thing, the 60's are now as alien as the 30's. If anything, *Lost in America* is making fun of the *Big Chill* generation, who cling to their interred visions with all the passion of necrophiliacs.

Most people finally realize that you don't have to travel or undergo analysis or divest yourself of possessions to find yourself. The search is coming to an end because the Eden Express always returns home. There is no magic in the search; there is only the hard and sometimes unrewarding work of being

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all you can be. Life's trials aren't always conquered, nor can they be avoided.

Our hero in *Lost in America* was lost for only a short time, long enough to realize that his fantasy wasn't compatible with the actual. The value of dreams is that they don't have to be tested. Albert Brooks, however, tried to make his fantasy into a life. But like all the refugees from the overheated decade, his psyche crashed on the perilous rocks of empirical evidence. He, at least, has the good sense to reject his bogus fantasy and return to the world that provides him with rewards and satisfaction.

The 60's cultural convulsion *has* finally passed. The life of escape has been replaced by bourgeois verities. Clearly, the marketers have changed the bourgeois image so that the aspiring middle class can now be yuppies. But it hardly matters. The yellow brick road to contentment is paved with hard work, imagination, and middle-class conventions. As the Buddha (especially the Buddha preached by Irving Babbitt) said, there is no easy way to nirvana, only unremitting effort. cc

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CORRESPONDENCE

Letter From Central America

by Michael Johns

World attention focused on Managua several months ago, as leaders of the Socialist world, led by Fidel Castro, converged on Nicaragua for the most stupendous Marxist levee since Ethiopia's $100 million bash for Colonel Mengistu. Meanwhile, thousands of Nicaraguan *campesinos*, dubbed "contras" by their enemies, continued to risk their lives in a voluntary, patriotic, and very lonely struggle against totalitarianism.

Recently, these freedom fighters have continued their struggle in the face of literally scores of disparaging and inaccurate accusations being made by those who seek to legitimize another aggressive Soviet satellite in our hemisphere and turn public opinion against the thousands of Nicaraguans who are seeking the restoration of democracy to their homeland. As the recent ultimatum to the Sandinistas signed by leading members of the democratic resistance in San Jose, Costa Rica, makes clear, these are democratic leaders and fighters with Nicaragua's best interests at heart.

Try to tell 18-year-old Scorpion, a two-year veteran of the Nicaraguan Democratic Force (FDN) resistance fighters, that his effort against the Sandinistas is guided by the Central Intelligence Agency. He's never even heard of them. Or try to tell Brenda, a 17-year-old fighter, that she is a holdover from Anastasio Somoza Debayle's National Guard. She was 11 years old when Somoza fell.

What these two teenagers could tell you about is life in Marxist Nicaragua. Brenda remembers when the Sandinistas blew up her church in 1981 for what the Sandinistas termed "counter-revolutionary" activities. Now Brenda proudly wears a Christian cross around her neck when she enters combat against them. Scorpion could tell you how his family's land was confiscated by the Sandinistas and he was issued ration coupons in return. The sugar his family produced for decades is now being sent to Communist Cuba, with no reimbursement, in exchange for arms, many of which, he claims, are being sent to Marxist guerrillas trying to topple the democratic government of El Salvador. Indeed, the May 13, 1983, report of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence seems to back up Scorpion's remarks. It concluded that there is "active promotion for revolution without frontiers throughout Central America by Cuba and Nicaragua." And by the admission of Sandinista Minister of the Interior Tomas Borge, Marxist revolution "will be exported to El Salvador, then Guatemala, then Honduras, then Mexico . . . that is one historical prophecy of Ronald Reagan's that is absolutely true."

The situation for these two teenagers in Marxist Nicaragua was so oppressive that they each marched over 60 miles through some of the most mountainous terrain in Nicaragua to join the freedom fighters in their camps along the Nicaraguan-Honduran border. Each of them has gone two years without seeing or hearing from their families. They have risked their lives almost every day over the past two years in an effort to defeat the "piricuacos" (the FDN's term for the Sandinistas, meaning "rabid dogs"), whom they claim have betrayed their original revolution of 1979 and created a totalitarian climate centered around political indoctrination, a militarized society, control of its citizens, and a gradual suppression of all nonrevolutionary institutions.

The scenario of an anticommunist revolution waged by democrats is by no means uncommon. Despite the Reagan Administration's tough anti-Sandinista rhetoric and the media's talk of "CIA-backed rebels," most of these democratic patriots go virtually unassisted by the country they admire most—America. As aid to these *campesinos* comes before the Congress, America is at a critical point in its treatment of freedom-loving peoples and its official attitude toward aggres-

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sive, totalitarian, and, some would argue, illegitimate regimes in our hemispheres. There can be little doubt about traditional U.S. policy on the issue. The Monroe Doctrine declares to foreign powers "that we should consider any attempt on their part to extend their system to any portion of this hemisphere as dangerous to our peace and safety." It should be noted that the Monroe Doctrine is wholly consistent with the Charters of both the United Nations and the Organization of American States in its recognition of the right of self-determination and collective and individual defense of American nations against nonhemispheric powers.

The world is watching America's response to the plea for assistance from the Nicaraguan rebels for many reasons. If America abandons the *campesinos*, they will most surely be defeated, and the Sandinistas will continue their "revolution without frontiers" unchallenged. This will be a clear signal to the democratic governments of Costa Rica, El Salvador, and Honduras that they can expect as much support from us as we are giving the democratic forces in Nicaragua.

However, the world watches our response for another reason. America, in the midst of a "Reagan revolution," has the potential to remodel its foreign policy forever. Grenada was a start. However, since World War II, America has carried out a foreign policy that has frequently left our allies bewildered and our enemies jubilant.

Today, contradictory policy still dominates our foreign policy and haunts the free world, thanks to a Congress and State Department that care little for Reaganism and less for consistency. As a result, America is assisting the "contras" on one hand and negotiating with the Sandinistas on the other. It is a policy which leaves everyone involved confused, especially the freedom fighters who view themselves as the American minutemen of 1985.

It is now early morning in this FDN camp along the Nicaraguan-Honduran border, and 1,000 *campesinos* are gathered in a large battlefield strongly clenching their automatic machine guns, most of which were captured from the Sandinistas. Four miles to the south, the sun begins to peek up over the Nicaraguan hills. "Con Dios y patriotismo," the fighters yell in deafening unison, "derrataremos al comunismo." With God and patriotism, they say, we will defeat communism.

Meanwhile, in Nicaragua, the Sandinista national anthem spouts out the lyrics: "Luchemos contra el Yangui, enemigo de la humanidad." Translation: "Let's fight against the Yankee, enemy of humanity." And in Washington the debate continues. cc

Michael Johns is the founding editor of the Miami Tribune, *a student newspaper at the University of Miami. In January of 1984 he was the first student journalist to visit a Nicaraguan Democratic Force camp along the Nicaraguan-Honduran border.*

CULTURAL REVOLUTIONS

Capitalism is now avant-garde. A recent issue of the *New Art Examiner* chronicled the pioneering work of two men from Battle Mountain, Nevada, who together constitute United Art Contractors. UAC explains their breakthrough in conceptual art as a shortcut to success:

> Every artist wants success and fame and if they could get it easily they would. We just bought it. Instead of sucking up to get a show—a degrading process—we paid up. So easy, so clean, so American. Just bypass the entire art system of hoping, waiting, praying for the one big break and dance up with the dollars.
>
> *We have no talent or ability—just cash.*
>
> We paid . . . $1,000 cash for a show. . . . The show will get great reviews because we'll write the reviews and pay to have them published. Why wait for others to say nasty things about you when you can say nice things about yourself first?
>
> We have no painting or sculpture—buying our way in is our art—there is nothing else.

No talent or ability—just cash? These Nevada artists are wasting their talents. They should move to Hollywood and produce television shows. cc

Poetry has replaced the wrecking ball in the latest version of urban renewal. In a recent issue of *State of the Arts*, the official publication of the California Arts Council, the deputy director of the council commented on a new program which subsidizes local arts initiatives:

> There is a pleasing irony: the program combines the idea of the neighborhood and locale—concepts which give and reinforce strong identity—with the forces of art and poetry, which probe frontiers and shatter preconceptions.

There is irony, but perhaps it is not entirely pleasing. The deputy director

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is certainly correct about modern art and poetry. At their best, they do "probe new frontiers" of the imagination. More typically, they shatter something more serious than preconceptions. So much of modern literature and art has been informed by hatred of the way things are, not just in this historical period, but throughout human history. Distinctions of sex and class might have been with us from the moment we quit sleeping in the trees. No matter, our artists and intellectuals have a better idea. Private property and nations? Gone with the same winds that blew in dada and absurdism. Courage, loyalty, and respect for women—these are all preconceptions to be shattered. In fact, art has declared war on whatever simple and ordinary people cling to, their religious faith, their affection for their community, and devotion to their family.

It was not always so. The great poets and sculptors of antiquity—Homer, Sophocles, Vergil, Phidias, and Praxiteles—all served their communities and gave new and richer expression to the common ideals. Artists were not rebels until the Romantic era, and even then the best of them affirmed the values and traditions of their nations. Walter Scott began his literary career as a collector of ballads, while the rebels, Wordsworth and Coleridge, attempted to restore the language of everyday speech in lyric poetry. Scott was always a Tory; Wordsworth and Coleridge ended up almost as reactionaries.

Even in this century, our greatest artists have been traditionalists and reactionaries who affirmed the goodness of their national and local traditions. One thinks immediately of Yeats, Eliot, and Faulkner, of Charles Péguy and the author of *And Quiet Flows the Don*. Picasso at his best was a loyal Spaniard.

Yet somehow the aberrant equation of art and iconoclasm has gained government support in contemporary America—and not just in California. Anyone who has driven along Interstate 80 in Nebraska and has seen the publicly funded modern sculpture found at the rest stops knows that things are much the same in middle America. Given the location of Nebraska's sculptures, they may have been vandalized, but as with much modern art it's impossible to tell. In New York these days, public galleries now let "graffiti artists" receive commissions for doing in a clean well-lighted place what they previously risked jail for doing in subways.

Perhaps by subsidizing local initiatives, California will encourage a new generation of Scotts and Phidiases, instead of the pretentious vandalism we have learned to expect from state-supported artists. cc

The French government is out to make amends for its relentless attack on American culture. It is true that in the past they decorated the likes of Jerry Lewis and William Styron, but now—in a surprise reversal—they have decided to honor a great American artist, Clint Eastwood, as a *chevalier des Artes et Lettres*. Everyone is discovering Eastwood's virtues—in England the *Guardian* called him a die-hard liberal. He has yet to win an Oscar, but the time may be almost right. If culture minister Jack Lang thought this award was another joke on the American people, he was mistaken. Eastwood, more than anyone in the film community, has dedicated his career to exploring the character of the American people. In the whole realm of the arts, he may be the best thing we've got in the 1980's.

Most people associate Eastwood with "Dirty Harry," the tough cop who refuses to play by the rules. Some have gone so far as to say that his only message is the self-reliance of the vigilante. How true that is even of Dirty Harry remains to be seen, but vigilantism does not have much to do with Eastwood's strangest films, *Bronco Billy*, *Honkytonk Man*, and *The Outlaw Josey Wales*. In *Josey Wales*, it's true, Eastwood played a Confederate guerrilla who practically takes on the whole U.S. Army after the war, but why? In the unforgettable opening scenes, a hardworking Missouri farmer sees his family murdered, his house burned to the ground. He recovers from his suicidal anguish only when Bloody Bill Anderson (whose life story resembles *Josey Wales*) offers him an opportunity for revenge. It is not violence *per se* that the film celebrates, but the defense of a way of life. In the end, Josey Wales adopts a group of strays and begins a new life with a new family.

Eastwood's best heroes—including Dirty Harry—have all lived the normal life of a family man but whose domestic world has been shattered by tragedy. Bronco Billy had been a shoe salesman in New Jersey until he caught his wife in bed with another man. His revenge cost him a stretch in the penitentiary, where he began to dream of creating a wild West show. None of the members of his troupe are the real thing—any more than Bronco Billy—but, as one of them explains, the wild West show is the place where you can become what you want to be. Just in case we think it's all illusion, Billy actually foils a bank holdup by shooting the gun out of the robber's hand.

In a final scene worthy of Fellini, Billy puts on his show under a tent made out of American flags sewn together by the criminally insane. (They wanted to help him out after his tent burned, but flags were the only thing they knew how to make.) Billy's advice to "the little pards" in the audience —to drink their milk and listen to Mom and Dad—is almost straight out of the *Boy Scout Handbook*, but in the bizarre context Eastwood gets away with it.

Clint Eastwood's America is an almost Jeffersonian vision of decent country folks, hardworking men and women, and above all, of families. If, in his cop movies, he is saying that it takes a Dirty Harry to preserve that way of life, then it is easy to understand why he is so popular among Blacks, who know, perhaps better than anyone, what it means to live with the ugly consequences of failed utopian social policies.

Now, when everyone is busy discovering Eastwood the actor, Eastwood the *auteur*, and (fantastically) Eastwood the liberal, it is high time that someone recognized him for what he is: the moral conscience of the American entertainment industry. I almost hope he doesn't win an Oscar: he's too good for it. (TJF) cc

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On Weapons of Despair

by Brian Murray

In his February review of Kosta Tsipis's *Arsenal* and Freeman Dyson's *Weapons and Hope*, Professor William Hawkins rightly reminds us that both geopolitical rubes and hard-core leftists are well represented in the "no-nukes" movement that has in recent years received considerable, not unfavorable, attention in the Western press. If we disarmed, argue the rubes, Soviet leaders would be so charmed by our magnanimity that they would junk their bombs, too, and peace would reign supreme. The leftists know better—and so does Professor Hawkins. The Soviets, with their chief rival gone, could not easily pass up a chance to try to run the world their way.

Still, I am not certain that Professor Hawkins has himself faced up to many of the hard realities of the nuclear age. Like too many "tough-minded" conservatives, Hawkins discusses nuclear bombs as if they were little more than bazooka shells: he even asserts that nuclear weapons have not really transformed the world. He writes approvingly, therefore, of the U.S. developing a "first-strike" capability so that inveterately "timid" American leaders would be better able to stare down the Soviets at the time of a "confrontation." He endorses an American ABM system that would be "60 percent" effective against a "massive" Soviet attack; in fact he writes breezily of American society "surviving" a nuclear war. Hawkins wants American citizens to be both adequately sheltered and "war-like," but he apparently does not want those citizens to think too much about how a thermonuclear war might originate and unfold. Nuclear strategy and military policy are, according to Hawkins, matters best left to the "experts." Moreover, he appears to imply that only wimps fear nuclear annihilation; that only fools or fellow-travelers believe in the value of arms negotiations.

To suggest that nuclear weapons have not profoundly changed the world is simply to ignore their awful destructive power—a power that continues to grow. Consider, one more time, these facts. The "Little Boy" bomb that flattened buildings and melted flesh at Hiroshima was little more than a BB compared to the multimegaton weapons that now sit primed in U.S. and Soviet subs and silos. In a "full scale" nuclear war between the United States and the Soviet Union, some missiles carrying 50 megaton warheads would be "exchanged"; within a couple of hours, nearly 15,000 megatons—or 5,000 World War II's—would be loosed upon the world.

Of course, even a single half-megaton warhead detonated in or over a large American city would result in unimaginable horror—in walls of fire and avalanches of concrete and glass; in a handful of survivors who would suffer the same ghastly cancers and birth defects found in Hiroshima and Nagasaki long after the summer of 1945. As an increasing number of studies show, similar bombs exploding in 100 cities in the Northern Hemisphere would send enough smoke and debris into the atmosphere to radically alter the earth's ecosystem and bring to extinction nearly all forms of plant and animal life. These bombs are not then practical instruments of war; they are weapons of genocide.

Given the awesome power of these weapons, it is simply hallucinatory to talk of "sheltering" citizens, especially since nuclear war, once begun, will simply not remain limited: both sides, programmed to "prevail," will punch every last button. Those who do talk about gutting it out when the Big Ones hit have perhaps seen too many "B" movies about The Battle of Britain.

It is equally unrealistic—and hair-raising—to talk of intimidating the Russians with "first-strike" weapons. Such a notion is itself Hollywoodish: it evokes the image of square-jawed Clint Eastwood training a .44 Magnum on some pistol-waving punk and growling, "Go ahead, make my day." In truth, Soviet military planners have made it quite clear that the next big stare-off—the next Cuban missile crisis, if you will—is not likely to end with headlines in the *New York Post* screaming "They Blinked!" The Soviets talk of responding to even a "small" nuclear attack on Soviet troops with a massive tactical launching of their own, and they subscribe to a policy of "preemption" that calls for the first firing of Soviet missiles if, during a period of extreme tension, an American strategic strike appears near at hand. Ours is already a hair-trigger world, and its security will hardly be enhanced if American officials, equipped with extremely accurate MX missiles, start talking about "taking out" Soviet missiles or stopping Soviet battalions with swift, "clean" hits. As Admiral Noel Gaylor has written, "The doctrine of first use . . . whether called 'limited' or 'tactical' . . . is an indirect way of saying 'Start a nuclear war.'"

Like Professor Hawkins, I would not like to see Helen Caldicott formulating American military policy. Nor do I want to see major defense questions placed on ballots in order to "let the voters decide." But unlike Hawkins, I am not at all troubled by attempts to place into the hands of the public accurate information about the world's nuclear arsenals. After all, this is, for better or worse, a democracy, where the actions of any powerful, special-

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ized group, including Pentagon chiefs, must remain open to the scrutiny of a citizenry that should be well-informed.

Unfortunately, the average American thinks less about the defense of the United States than he does about, say, the fate of the United States Football League. Thus, in this country at least, the many issues related to atomic war are rarely debated seriously in anything like a public forum—even at election time. Our average citizen will never oppose "High Frontier," for he is quite content to let the President, the Joint Chiefs, and those guys in the silos in South Dakota worry about all those bombs and stuff.

Indeed, a strong case could be made that nuclear weapons are largely responsible for the decline in the West of our traditionally valued military virtues. It is hard for many Americans and NATO soldiers to take their roles very seriously when they know that ultimately the defense of their country depends less on their gallantry than on unseen technicians who sit behind computer screens in air-conditioned bunkers. Certainly, the "nuclear umbrella" held open by Uncle Sam continues to allow our rather well-off European allies to spend relatively little for their own defense, to channel considerable tax revenues on a whole host of often questionable social welfare schemes.

Nuclear weapons are also largely responsible, I think, for the more pronounced symptoms of cultural decadence that Professor Hawkins understandably scores. For obviously the very presence of these apocalyptic armaments has done little to encourage a reverence for permanence and tradition, and much to encourage the notion that we might as well live in the fast lane for tomorrow we might all find ourselves vaporized.

A space-based antiballistic system makes sense if we intend to use it as a possible means of intercepting accidentally launched ICBM's; it makes absolutely no sense if we plan to use it as a protective shield beneath which we can wage a "victorious" nuclear war. For as Hawkins admits, "there can never be a perfect defense," and in the event of a nuclear war an imperfect defense will mean millions of dead Americans and survivors who are not likely to derive comfort from knowing that the Iron Curtain countries —though smoking and radiating— are, at long last, free. Nuclear bombs have absolutely no military value except as instruments of deterrence. As President Reagan has insisted, these weapons must never be used and, as soon as possible, must be eliminated from the face of the earth. cc

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Professor Hawkins Replies:

It was certainly not my intention to trivialize the impact of a nuclear war. Clearly, such a war would produce a level of death and destruction surpassing any previous conflict. The U.S., isolated by geography from both previous world wars, has nothing in its history of a comparable nature. The U.S.S.R. has the experience of World War II on which to draw—a war during which large tracts of Soviet territory were occupied or devastated and 25 million people died. However, contrary to the cliché about how the experience has made the Russian people peace-loving, the experience has likely hardened the Kremlin in its militarism. After all, the Soviet leadership survived World War II intact. It came out of the war stronger politically than when it went in. It conquered half of Europe and emerged as one of only two Superpowers. Another war, if casualties could be kept at the same ratio to population and, more importantly, if the Soviet leadership felt it could again survive, would give the Soviets control of the rest of Europe and a monopoly on Superpower status with global hegemony—a fair definition of victory from the Kremlin's perspective.

Deterrence must depend, then, not just on the specter of killing millions of Russian civilians. The Soviet leadership has killed millions of its own civilians without qualm. It must depend on the ability of the U.S. to defeat the U.S.S.R. in battle. The Soviets are cold-blooded and ruthless, but they are not suicidal. They will not start a war they know they will lose. The U.S. needs what Colin Gray has advocated as "a theory of victory" for a potential war with the U.S.S.R. in order to maintain a credible deterrent and to prevail should deterrence fail. To implement such a theory requires both new offensive and defensive weapon systems.

Murray's gravest error is in regard to the effectiveness of the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI). The 60 percent figure he cites is from Tsipis, who begrudgingly admitted that even the old ABM system of the early 1970's could have been this effective. The SDI is expected to be much better, especially if deployed in depth. Of course, no system is 100 percent effective and the disarmament crowd has attempted to set perfection as the minimum requirement, knowing that such a standard would doom any system. But this is nonsense.

It is the Soviets who require near perfection. A first-strike must knock out most U.S. retaliatory forces or it is pointless. A defense system which can destroy 90 percent of the attack force would make such an attack impossible to plan with sufficient confidence to launch. Planners would not be able to predict which 10 percent of their strike force would make it, thus they would have no idea what targets they could destroy. Even much lower rates of effectiveness would defeat a first-strike plan. It should be noted that the Soviet counterforce posture is a form of anti-missile defense. They plan to knock our missiles out on the ground, we plan to knock theirs out in space. The intended result is the same: to prevent successful attacks on the homeland. The SDI does represent a continuation of the arms race, but an offensive-defensive race which is preferable to a purely offensive race which favors the aggressor.

It hardly helps to engage in scare tactics based on misinformation. Murray seems to think both Superpowers have 50-megaton (MT) warheads on their ICBM's. Where he got this data is unknown. It is completely false. The MIRV warheads on our Minuteman ICBM's are either 175 or 350 kilotons (KT). The MX warheads will also be 350-KT or .007 of Murray's figure! Submarine-launched missiles are even smaller, being only 40-KT. The great

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unmentioned fact of the arms race is that since 1960 the average U.S. warhead has been shrunk from 3-MT to about 0.2-MT, reducing the overall arsenal from 11,000-MT to about 3,200-MT despite an increase in the number of warheads. The Soviets have followed roughly the same pattern with average warheads dropping from 4.5-MT in 1960 to 0.9-MT today, reducing their arsenal from 9,000-MT to 6,200-MT.

It is not arms control or détente, but military strategy and the development of new technology which has produced this reduction in nuclear firepower. Murray seems to think that nuclear weapons will be used primarily to destroy cities. If that was the intent, the arms race would have ended two decades ago when both powers possessed this capability. Robert McNamara and the "best and the brightest" thought this would be the case. The idea of Mutual Assured Destruction is based on this error. The flaw is that the decision-makers in Moscow did not believe the abstract theories formulated by liberal academics.

Instead, the Soviets merely incorporated the new weapons into traditional military concepts. The evolution of weapons for the last 15 years has all been away from "city-busting" and genocide, neither of which are militarily or politically useful. The function of military force is not to destroy the world but to dominate it. The Soviets started this trend in the late 1960's with the deployment of the SS-9—a weapon designed with a military mission.

In theory, we have always targeted military forces, command-centers, and industrial sites, not population. However, in the days of inaccurate weapons, warheads had to be large enough to miss the target by a few miles and still destroy it. This magnified collateral damage. Now, with weapons accurate to within 150 yards (less when "smart" warheads are deployed) this overkill is not needed and is thus discarded. Robert Jastrow has argued that this trend might eventually reduce nuclear weapons to the point where they would be little different in effect than conventional weapons. The "peace" activists, by resisting this progress, are not only undermining deterrence, they are supporting the continuation of Armageddon policies.

The U.S. has the technology, but the Soviets are ahead in doctrine. They do not accept that once the button is pushed the world ends. They train their army to advance across radioactive terrain; they build missiles that "cold-launch" so that the silos can be reloaded; they build counterforce weapons and experiment with the SDI technology President Reagan talks about; and they have elaborate civil defense and evacuation plans. They even have underground factories. The alchemy of "nuclear winter" sends no chill through them. They know that a nuclear war is possible and they intend to survive it and win it. The Bolsheviks know what happened to the last Russian government which lost a war.

The decline of military spirit in the West predates nuclear weapons. That decline helps explain why nuclear weapons were considered cheap substitutes for conventional weapons, cheaper not only monetarily (more bang for the buck), but politically. They did not require conscription and a garrison state. Besides, MAD promised eternal peace. We have learned that conventional warfare is still with us. We are learning that nuclear war is possible as well. Let us hope we can learn without the Soviets giving us any practical lessons the hard way. cc

William Hawkins is professor of economics at Radford University.

TYPEFACES

Thunder on the Right

National Review has been the flagship of the conservative movement for almost 30 years. From the very beginning, its editors set the agenda for American conservatism. *NR*'s peculiar mixture of capitalist anticommunism with the concerns of traditional Catholicism defined the movement. Even before being cursed with the name "fusionism," it was a potent combination. Where else in the 1950's could you find Richard Weaver in company with Joe McCarthy? In fact, for good or ill, Senator McCarthy was to become *the cause* to which the new magazine dedicated itself.

In the third issue (7 December 1955) *NR* hailed McCarthy as "the only national figure to warn . . . of the pitfalls of top-level negotiations with the Kremlin" and applauded his demands for more congressional investigations. The tribute is all the more touching, since it came seven months after the senator's embarrassments at the Army hearings and just five days after the Senate's censure. It was said of Kentucky that she joined the Confederacy only after the war was over, and *National Review* was to become the journal of McCarthyism only after the senator had effectively ended his career.

By the end of 1955, McCarthy was already history in the eyes of many Americans, but he could still write in *NR* a review of Dean Acheson's *A Democrat Looks at His Party*. McCar-

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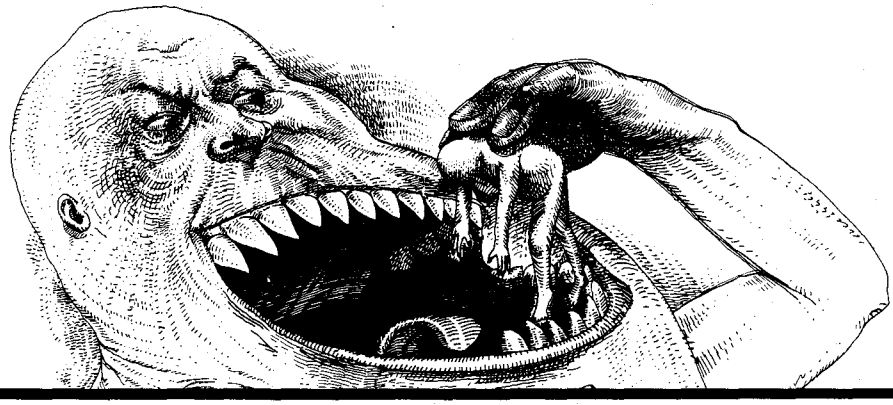

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thy ridiculed "Brains" Acheson for his foreign policy—"a complete and disastrous failure"—and described the book as "a pathetic gesture by a discredited statesman who wants to prove he is still around, and still using those brains of his." The Senator was actually rather witty, but the war was over. Still, NR kept up a guerrilla campaign against the senator's enemies and published elaborate flowcharts demonstrating the links between the anti-McCarthy subversives. To some it was *Hamlet* without the prince, but Mr. Buckley and his allies were nothing if not loyal.

All this took courage. The intellectual community was dead set against McCarthy. The *Freeman*, founded in 1950 by John Chamberlain, Henry Hazlitt, and Suzanne LaFollette, fell apart over the issue of McCarthyism. The journal was founded as an organ of "true liberalism" of common law and limited government and managed to attract contributors like Ludwig von Mises, Friedrich Hayek, and a young William F. Buckley Jr.; but quarrels over collaboration with the McCarthy hearings soon helped put an end to an ambitious project. As Chamberlain recently put it, "We had muffed the chance . . . to fight the Leftist intellectual weeklies . . . on their own ground."

It was not just the *Freeman* that came to grief. McCarthy became a kind of test case. Conservative intellectuals like James Burnham were told—sometimes in so many words—either denounce the senator or forfeit any hopes of pursuing a career. All in all, the omens were not auspicious at the birth of a serious magazine which identified itself as McCarthyite. Even many conservatives were less than enthusiastic. T. S. Eliot wrote Russell Kirk to express his dismay over a journal that so obviously had made up its mind on everything—McCarthy's review of Acheson he saw as a sign of intellectual bad faith on the part of the editors.

It may be an irrelevant fact that the senator was right, that American institutions were riddled with subversion and rot. (The maddening thing about the hard left is the way they continue to put on airs of moral superiority even while engaged in the dirtiest sorts of business. Even Alger Hiss is still around protesting his innocence.) Irrelevant, because McCarthyism was one of those populist outbreaks that always alarm the intellectual classes: whatever they may say, intellectuals as a class support their own interests, whether they are kissing the ground a prince walks on or fawning on a Marxist dean or editor. It was a terrifying prospect: ordinary Americans determined to throw the Reds out of the government, taxpayers and voters worried about what was taught in the state university. You didn't have to be a Communist to be alarmed.

In fact, the ranks did close against *National Review* and its contributors. Even so, NR was able to give a start to writers, some of whom abandoned them for greener pastures—Joan Didion and the renegade Gary Wills; and they did succeed in enlisting a regiment of serious scholars and able writers—Hugh Kenner, Russell Kirk, D. Keith Mano, Thomas Molnar, and M. E. Bradford, among others. But the depressing fact is that a great number of serious thinkers and writers have been scared off, not just from NR, but from nearly every publication that is identifiably conservative.

We do have our stars, it is true—clever and forceful journalists like Joe Sobran and Tom Bethell. But where are the novelists? Where are the poets, the scientists, the scholars? Oh, in any field we can come up with a few names to conjure with, especially in recent years: Robert Jastrow in astronomy; Robert Conquest, a poet as well as a Soviet scholar; historian John Lukacs; George Gilder, Cleanth Brooks, Andrew Lytle. But the list does thin out rapidly. In any discussion of conservative intellectuals, someone is bound to point to writers like Walter Percy, Saul Bellow, and Alisdair MacIntyre, all of whom have what can only be described as a conservative view of life; and yet I do not remember reading any one of them in the pages of NR or the *American Spectator* or seeing their names on the membership lists of conservative organizations.

The isolation of the intellectual right has had profound consequences for serious journals like *Modern Age*, *Continuity*, and *Intercollegiate Review*, which are, to a great extent, shunned by all except the committed right. In its great days, *Modern Age* held out a great deal of promise as an organ of conservative opinion in which ideas could be taken seriously, and there is hope for its revival under George Panichas, the new editor. But—and this is painful to admit—much of conservative academic journalism is less than first-rate. There are splendid pieces like William McGurn's essay on Whittaker Chambers in *MA* or Clyde Wilson's essay on American historiography in *Continuity*, but they often look more like exceptions than the rule.

Conservatives frequently complain about discrimination: their articles are turned down, their books rejected or given bad reviews out of ideological spite. There is a good deal of truth in the contention. The left continues to pretend that there is no scholarship on

LIBERAL ARTS

Through a New Glass Darkly

In a recent article in *Christianity and Crisis*, Rosemary Ruether, a professor of applied theology at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, challenges the oppressive patriarchy of Christianity. A true and liberating belief cannot "rely on exegesis of past tradition, however ingeniously redefined" because:

> This faith cannot be first of all in the church, its tradition, or

> its Scripture. . . .

What *does* feminist theology draw upon?

> It must be engaged in primal re-encounter with divine reality, and in this re-encounter new stories will grow and be told as new foundations of our identity.

All Moses had to do was send Miriam back up Sinai for a rewrite. ∞

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the right and to ignore even neoconservative journals like *Public Interest*, which any responsible intellectual has to regard as a major force. On the other hand, many conservative scholars simply do not work hard enough to be taken seriously outside the movement. An article on natural rights published recently in a conservative journal included footnotes to Leo Strauss and Harry Jaffa, but of the wealth of serious scholarship on Plato and Aristotle, no mention: silence supreme. There are, to be sure, real scholars—Peter Stanlis, Forrest McDonald, and Paul Gottfried, for example—who do their homework, but they stand out. In some fields, like economics, however, conservatives were on the cutting edge. While the left continued to intone their Marxist and Keynesian platitudes, our economists and social critics—Milton Friedman, Tom Sowell, Michael Novak, and Edward Banfield—revolutionized our approach to social problems. As a reward, they were routinely excommunicated from the academic civil religion. (Banfield was actually driven out of Penn by a sustained campaign of vilification.)

There is little evidence to suggest that the embargo on conservative—read McCarthyist—writers and journals is going to be lifted any time in the near future. Many of the best scholars on the right—Conquest and Nisbet, for example—continue to be taken seriously by the mainstream, but there have been casualties, writers who became too closely identified with the right and somehow turned into unpersons: James Burnham, for example. Perhaps the most unfortunate victim is Russell Kirk. A scholar, man of letters, and writer of tales, Kirk was well on his way, in the 1950's, to becoming one of America's great literary celebrities. When *Eliot and His Age* appeared in the 1960's, it was hailed as a masterpiece by *The Nation*. Now, in the 1980's, it would be unusual to find him mentioned in *The New Republic*, much less *The Nation*.

It is not just the right that has suffered. Until recently, liberal and left-wing intellectuals found themselves forced to keep company with Stalinists and to swallow their indignation when, as in the 1960's, they saw every ideal of fairness and civility dragged into the mud. Increasingly, they were alienated from the wholesome values which had come to be identified with conservatism—regard for the family, love of country, and respect for (if not always actual belief in) our religious traditions. Conservative scholars might have had inadequate bibliographies, but on the main points—the points on which our survival depends—they were right.

For all his crudeness, Tail-Gunner Joe did a great deal of good in the world, and it would be unfair to blame him for the isolation and alienation of the intellectual right. Perhaps the main trouble with McCarthyism is that the senator, like most people who believe in conspiracies, was an incorrigible optimist. He really believed that once we got rid of the Communists and Fellow Travelers, we could all breathe easy. The truth is, actual subversion was only a very small part of the problem. The fact that we were willing to tolerate it, that Alger Hiss could be defended in responsible journals of opinion, was a symptom of a much more disturbing disorder that afflicted all our cultural institutions. Call it liberalism or modernism or utopian social visions, what it boiled down to is a violent hatred for everything American. The betrayal went too deep for a junior senator from Wisconsin to fathom. (TJF) cc

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Shine, Perishing Republic

(continued from page 5)

and Jack Kemp, Republican politicians do not know how to charm the populist masses. As for whatever is left of Catholic conservatism and other traditionalist groups, their big complaint (shared by populist social conservatives) is that the President and his friends consistently put economic issues above social issues. They can be heard to mutter, on occasion, that the eventual capitalist response to abortion will be to turn it into a growth industry by providing it with tax incentives.

Perhaps the only thing keeping the conservative minds on the same range of frequencies is our very American and conservative habit of avoiding discussions of first principles. Once we begin telling each other what we really think, the alliance could go on the rocks like a marriage destroyed by too much candor. Nonetheless, we are going to have to make the effort, however painful. We are confronted with too many urgent questions and pressing problems which cannot be solved by our usual "live for today, tomorrow we die" approach to policymaking. Back in the 50's, conservatives were engaged in a constructive—albeit sometimes passionate—dialogue. Perhaps it is time to reopen some of the old issues and benefit from the wisdom of the Founding Fathers, not so much in the expectation of finding answers (I certainly don't have them) but as a part of a continuous discipline which we ought to impose on ourselves in our muddled effort to clarify where we stand. If we cannot make up our minds about what we are living for, we shall soon find our minds made up for us by circumstances and by the usual lowest common denominator of politics: the ancient calculus of survival and power. "Where there is no vision, the people perish."

—*Thomas Fleming*

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